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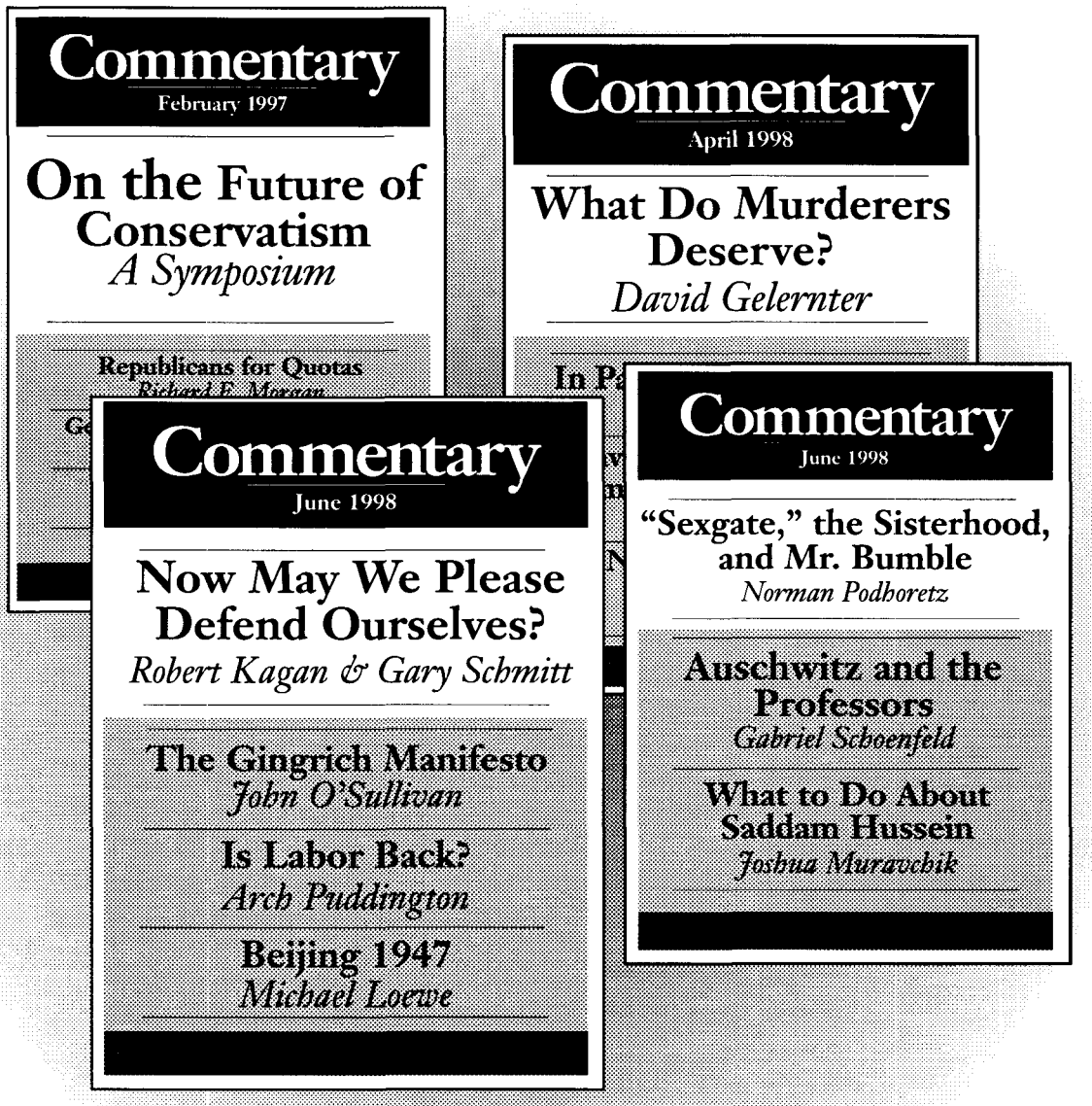

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The Ties That Fray

Why Europe and America are Drifting Apart

Stephen M. Walt

POLITICIANS ON BOTH sides of the Atlantic are fond of describing NATO as the most successful military alliance in modern history. Who can blame them? The transatlantic partnership between Europe and America brought peace to a war-torn continent, overcame the Soviet challenge, and provided a safe haven in which to nurture European political and economic integration. Security ties between Europe and America also facilitated cooperation on a host of other issues, and helped foster a remarkable period of material prosperity.

Given these achievements, it is hardly surprising that few voices now call for an end to the alliance, and equally unsurprising that pundits like Zbigniew Brzezinski believe it can work a similar magic in areas far beyond NATO's original mandate.[1] Unfortunately, such claims ignore the deep structural forces that are already beginning to pull Europe and America apart. Instead of becoming the core of an expanding security community, united by liberal values, free markets, and strong international institutions, the transatlantic partnership that fought and won the Cold War is already showing unmistakable signs of strain. No matter how many new states join NATO, and no matter how many solemn reaffirmations emerge from the endless parade of NATO summits, the high-water mark of transatlantic security cooperation is past.

The reasons are not difficult to discern. For the past forty years, the partnership between Europe and the United States was held together by three unifying forces. The first and most important was the Soviet threat. The second was America's economic stake in Europe, which reinforced its strategic interest in European prosperity. The third was the existence of a generation of European and American elites whose personal backgrounds and life experiences left them strongly committed to the idea of an Atlantic community.

All three unifying forces are now gone or eroding, and there is little hope of resurrecting them. NATO's formal structure may remain intact (and the alliance may keep busy adding new members), but Americans and Europeans should no longer base their foreign and military policies on a presumption of military cooperation.

The Pattern of Intervention

TO A LARGE extent, the entire idea of an "Atlantic community" rests on America's willingness to commit its military power to defend its European allies. When considering whether this commitment has a

Stephen M. Walt is professor of political science at the University of Chicago. A longer version of this article appears in Charles A. Kupchan, ed., *Atlantic Security: Contending Visions* (Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Relations/Brookings Institution, 1998).

[1]See Zbigniew Brzezinski, "NATO: The Dilemmas of Expansion", *The National Interest* (Fall 1998).

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future, it is useful to recall when and why it arose in the first place.

In this century, the United States has taken on major overseas commitments on three occasions: World War I, World War II, and the Cold War. The common thread in each case has been fear that another great power was about to establish hegemony in Europe or Asia.[2]

It is worth remembering that the United States did not intervene in either world war until it became clear that the Eurasian powers were unable to uphold the balance of power on their own. The United States let the other powers bear most of the costs of their competition, and emerged from each of these conflicts in much better shape than anyone else.

This self-interested policy may not have been good for the Europeans or Asians, but it wasn't all that bad for the United States. Instead of letting our allies free-ride on us, as they have done since 1949, the United States spent the first part of the century free-riding on them. Earlier and more extensive U.S. involvement might have prevented these conflicts, but such efforts might well have failed, and at far higher cost to the United States.

Similarly, the United States withdrew most of its armed forces from Europe after World War II, and agreed to bring them back only when it became clear that the European powers were in no position to stand up to the Soviet Union. Yet, even then, U.S. leaders never envisioned the permanent deployment of American troops in Europe and actively sought to bring them home throughout the 1950s.[3]

What these episodes suggest—and suggest strongly—is that the United States has been willing to sustain costly military commitments outside the Western Hemisphere only when another great power has threatened to establish hegemony in Europe (and the same, incidentally, is true of Asia). Europe faces no such threat today, and there are no credible threats on the horizon. Whatever U.S. forces are doing in Europe, they are not there to protect our wealthy and stable allies from external aggression.

No Threat, No Cohesion

WESTERN EUROPE and the United States were brought together by the raw power of the Soviet Union, its geographic proximity to Europe, its large, offensively oriented military forces, and its open commitment to spreading world revolution. Because the Europeans were loath to sacrifice their independence and the United States was loath to let any single power dominate the entire Eurasian landmass, the industrial democracies of Europe and North America had ample reason to downplay their differences in order to preserve a common front.[4]

The disappearance of the Soviet threat has eliminated this overriding common interest, and though Europe and the United States still share some common goals, they are of a different order of urgency and seriousness. The United States and Europe are separated by geography, language, historical experience, and relative capabilities, and the U.S. interest in Europe is neither as obvious nor as significant in the absence of a potential hegemon perched on NATO's doorstep. This absence is to be welcomed, of course, and it would be foolish—and dangerous—to conjure up new foes merely to keep the West together. But, inevitably, this fundamental shift in the landscape of world politics is already having adverse effects on the transatlantic partnership.

First, conflicts of interest are becoming more visible and significant. The sad history

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[2]This line of analysis is developed at length in John J. Mearsheimer, "The Future of America's Continental Commitment", in Geir Lundestad, ed., *No End to Alliance: The United States and Western Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1998).

[3]See Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[4]See my *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), especially chapter 8.

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of the Bosnian conflict offers eloquent testimony to this, and only the realization that NATO was coming unglued brought a belated and partial agreement for common action. NATO did manage to make a token show of force in response to Serbian repression in Kosovo, but its reluctance to take meaningful military action was apparent to all and the agreement negotiated by Richard Holbrooke is a temporary fix at best. America's European allies openly reject the policy of "dual containment" in the Persian Gulf and have been increasingly unwilling to enforce the UNSCOM inspection regime against Iraq. Our allies also hold profoundly different views on the Middle East peace process and on the proper approach to Castro's Cuba, and they are quietly resentful of America's penchant for cloaking unilateral action in the rhetoric of "multilateralism." The United States stood alone at the Kyoto conference on the environment, broke ranks with its allies over a global ban on landmines, and is the only NATO member to vote against the creation of an International Criminal Court to try accused human rights violators. The October G-7 meeting on the world financial crisis was notable primarily for the absence of any consensus, despite the worldwide recognition that concerted action would be helpful. Europeans also resent America's cultural hegemony and are baffled by the partisan bloodletting of *l'affaire Lewinsky*.

Second, the lack of a common foe exacerbates the familiar problem of credibility. So long as Soviet forces stood on the Elbe, the United States had an obvious interest in keeping Western Europe independent of Soviet control. Although it was occasionally necessary to make symbolic gestures to reaffirm the commitment, U.S. interest in keeping the Red Army out of Western Europe gave it fundamental credibility. Now that there is no real threat, however, our allies have valid grounds to question our staying power. It can hardly be reassuring, for example, that the United States tried repeatedly to get the Europeans to solve the Bosnian crisis on their own, and that the eventual U.S. entry into Bosnia was accompanied by open hand-wringing in Congress and by an all-too-visible reluctance to risk even minimal U.S. casualties. No matter how often or how eloquently the President or his senior advisers reaffirm the U.S. commitment, Europeans now have ample reason to doubt it. Rhetoric cannot substitute for interest.

Third, all parties to the alliance now have a wider array of options. During the Cold War, the rigid logic of bipolarity limited choices on both sides of the Iron Curtain, which meant there was little debate about the fundamentals of Western grand strategy. Europeans had no choice but to rely on the United States and defer to its wishes, and the United States had little choice but to protect them. Isolationism was utterly discredited in the United States, and a truly independent foreign and military policy was never seriously considered in countries like Germany.

Options that were once ruled out are being openly proposed, possibilities that were previously rejected can be reconsidered, and seemingly sacrosanct commitments can be reexamined.[5] This new latitude is itself an important development, because we can never be sure what elites and publics will conclude once an issue is opened up to new ideas.

These sources of strain are not a big secret; if anything, the constant reaffirmations of transatlantic solidarity actually betray the widespread tacit recognition that the alliance can no longer be taken for granted. The key point, however, is that these stresses are not due to a failure of will, vision, or political skill on the part of NATO's present leaders—and therefore cannot be remedied by greater effort

[5]Proposals for a more independent U.S. grand strategy include Eric Nordlinger, *Isolationism Reconfigured: American Foreign Policy for a New Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); and Eugene Gholz, Daryl Press, and Harvey Sapolsky, "Come Home America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation", *International Security* (Spring 1997).

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in those departments. Rather, they are a direct consequence of the Soviet collapse, which removed the single most important cause of transatlantic security cooperation. This does not mean that NATO will dissolve next week, of course. But it does mean that its strongest source of cohesion is now gone.

Weakening Economic Ties

DURING NATO's heyday, economic ties between Europe and America helped reinforce the overriding strategic rationale. U.S. policymakers recognized that Europe's economic recovery would contribute to America's own economic growth and strengthen the Western alliance as a whole. Europe was also an important trading partner and a substantial target for U.S. foreign investment, although our stake in Europe was still a relatively small share of the U.S. economy.[6]

This source of unity is now also of declining importance as well. Asia surpassed Europe as the main target of U.S. trade as long ago as 1983, and U.S. trade with Asia is now more than one and a half times larger than trade with Europe. U.S. direct investment in Europe is still larger than that in Asia, but the gap has begun to close.[7]

The shift in U.S. foreign economic activity has been accompanied by a simultaneous trend toward regionalization.[8] European integration has proceeded apace, beginning with the Single European Act in 1986 and continuing through the Maastricht agreement in 1991 and the imminent debut of the single European currency, the euro. A similar tendency may be observed on the other side of the Atlantic as well, most notably in the 1992 North American Free Trade Agreement entered into by the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

These developments threaten transatlantic ties in several ways. First, although economic connections do not *determine* security commitments, the shift in economic activity from Europe to Asia will inevitably lead U.S. policymakers to devote more energy and attention to the latter. This is especially the case since major security challenges are more likely to arise in Asia, and that is where the most likely future challenger to U.S. hegemony—the People's Republic of China—is located. The Asian financial crisis and the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests are likely to reinforce this gradual shift. Time and resources being finite, all this heralds an inevitable decline in the level of attention devoted to Europe. (Bear in mind that former Secretary of State Warren Christopher took office warning against an overly "Eurocentric" foreign policy. The Bosnian tragedy was thus something of a godsend for Europhiles, because it forced the Clinton administration to pay more attention to Europe than it had initially intended.) Although area specialists and bureau chiefs will continue to keep watch on their appointed regions, high-level officials will devote less time, energy, and political capital to an area whose relative importance is declining. European leaders may try to fight this trend, but will eventually react by paying less attention to Washington. The result will be an erosion of transatlantic cohesion.

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[6]In 1960 U.S. direct investment in Europe was only 1.2 percent of U.S. GDP, and the return on that investment amounted to only $397 million (compared to a total GDP of $526 billion). See *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1962* (Washington, DC: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1963).

[7]In both cases, the sums involved are too small to have a decisive impact on U.S. security commitments. In 1990 U.S. direct investment in Europe was roughly $214 billion, and in Asia roughly $64 billion. By 1994 the respective figures were, roughly, $300 billion and $108 billion. See *International Direct Investment Statistics Yearbook, 1996* (Paris: OECD, 1996), and *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1996* (Washington, DC: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1997).

[8]See Jeffrey T. Frankel, *Regional Trading Blocs in the World Economic System* (Washington, DC: Institute for International Economics, 1997), pp. 112-13, 229.

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Again, the expansion of the European Union is bound to create further tensions. NATO expansion and European political and monetary union are often portrayed as mutually supportive initiatives, which will bring new and old democracies together in an expanding liberal order. These initiatives *may* be compatible within Europe itself, but a stronger EU will strain ties with the United States in countless ways. Economic and monetary union will make Europe a more formidable economic rival, and the euro could eventually challenge the dollar's position as the principal international reserve currency. Thus, some of the fiscal advantages the United States has long enjoyed in the international financial system will be lost, and there will be new conflicts over the management of the international economic order.[9]

Many Europeans believe that monetary union means greater political unity. If this does indeed occur, the resulting "United States of Europe" will be larger, wealthier, and potentially more powerful than the United States of America. Over time, Americans would probably come to regard such a European superstate as a major global rival. And after having been forced to accept U.S. leadership for over half a century, the leaders of a United Europe would undoubtedly relish the chance to assert their independence. At a minimum, European integration means that the United States no longer needs to stay in Europe to keep our allies from fighting each other. At a maximum, it means the emergence of a potential challenger to U.S. primacy.

Domestic Changes

THE STRUCTURAL shifts pulling the United States and Europe apart will be reinforced by domestic developments on both sides of the Atlantic. These trends will be difficult if not impossible to reverse, further weakening the glue that has kept the transatlantic partnership together for four decades.

The United States traces its origins to European civilization, and most Americans have ancestral ties there. These ties are sometimes invoked to justify our present commitments, and to explain why we remain deeply interested in European affairs. Yet this source of transatlantic solidarity is often overstated. The original settlers and Founding Fathers were not exactly loyal Europeans, and many of the immigrants who populated North America did not harbor affectionate sentiments toward the countries they had left. Cultural and ethnic ties between Europe and America did not prevent the United States from staying out of Europe's conflicts during the nineteenth century, and did not make America's leaders eager to enter either world war. And we should not forget that both wars were fought *against* Europeans as well as *with* them.

Moreover, to the extent that ethnic or cultural ties reinforced our interest in Europe, their effectiveness is probably diminishing. Not only is the percentage of U.S. citizens of European origin declining, but the original European immigrants arrived several generations ago and assimilation and intermarriage have by now diluted the sense of affinity with the "old country."[10] Recent immigrants from Asia or Latin America are more likely to retain these cultural affinities and to hold strong views about U.S. policy toward these areas.

Furthermore, the past four decades have witnessed a profound westward shift in the U.S. population, away from the Atlantic. In 1950 approximately 27 percent of the U.S. population lived in the Northeast, while the West contained a mere 13.7 percent. In 1995, by contrast, the West had grown to 21.9 percent of the U.S. population while the

[9]See C. Fred Bergsten, *Weak Dollar, Strong Euro?: The International Impact of EMU* (London: Centre for European Reform, 1998).

[10]The percentage of U.S. citizens of European origin will decline from 80 percent in 1980 to 64 percent in 2020, while the percentage of Hispanics will rise from 6 to 15 percent and of Asians from 2 to 7 percent. *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1994* (Washington, DC: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1994).

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Northeast had fallen to 19.6 percent. The U.S. Bureau of the Census also predicts that the fastest growing states in the period 1993-2020 will be Nevada, Hawaii, California, and Washington. California (already the most populous state in the country) is expected to add another sixteen million persons by 2020.[11] This shift westward could also encourage a gradual shift in geopolitical focus.

The most important trend, however, concerns generational change. As symbolized by the last two U.S. presidential elections, in which decorated World War II veterans were defeated by a man born *after* that war who had avoided military service, we are now witnessing the swan song of the generation for whom the Depression, World War II, and the early Cold War were defining historical events. The people who built NATO were East Coast internationalists with strong personal and professional ties to Europe: men like Dean Acheson, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Paul Nitze, and John Foster Dulles. That generation cut its teeth on conflict in Europe, and the transatlantic partnership was their most enduring professional legacy. They believed that Europe's fate was worth fighting—and perhaps dying—for, and they were willing to risk considerable blood and treasure to protect these allies.

These figures are now gone, and the successor generations have grown up with very different memories and associations. Watching *Saving Private Ryan* is no substitute for having lived through the real thing, and the familiar litanies of transatlantic partnership will not resonate as loudly for the cohort that is beginning to move into key think tanks, government ministries, legislative seats, and eventually into executive mansions. The Cold War partnership between Europe and America will have even less meaning to those now in high school or college, or to children for whom the Cold War itself will be merely an historical episode. Subsequent generations may recognize the value of transatlantic cooperation and try to preserve it, but it will never kindle the reflexive emotional response that it did for their parents and grandparents.

Taken together, these forces mean that, instead of being guided by an elite group of East Coast internationalists committed to Europe by family backgrounds, personal experiences, and professional affiliations, U.S. foreign policy will be shaped by a more diverse collection of elites whose ethnic characteristics, geographic points of reference, and personal experiences will not grant Europe pride of place.

A similar process is occurring across the Atlantic. The post-World War II generation was accustomed to following the U.S. lead, both because it was dependent on U.S. protection and because the war had shattered Europe's self-confidence. These handicaps will not shackle the next generation of European leaders, who are going to be much less willing to follow Uncle Sam wherever he points. To note just one example, the recent German election signals the arrival of a new generation of German leaders, whose "youthful indiscretions" include open opposition to NATO and participation in anti-American street demonstrations. Although men like Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer have moderated their earlier views, it is hard to believe that Germany's new leaders will be as responsive to American dictates as were their predecessors. The ascendance of these new elites does not sound a death knell for the alliance, but preserving it will certainly be more difficult.

Is there any evidence of these trends already? On the one hand, U.S. elites and mass publics continue to support an "internationalist" foreign policy, and have soundly endorsed NATO's eastward expansion. Americans continue to see Europe as an important interest and citizens on both sides

[11] See *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1996*, and *Population Profile of the United States, 1995*, Current Population Reports, Special Studies Series P23-189 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1995).

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of the Atlantic apparently retain a high regard for one another.[12]

On the other hand, there is growing evidence of a declining willingness to engage in costly overseas commitments. Although 65 percent of U.S. citizens still believe the United States should take "an active part" in world affairs (at least when the alternative response is "staying out"), their support wanes when warned that this role might entail real sacrifices.[13] Support for the U.S. deployment to Bosnia, for example, is clearly predicated on the assumption that this will not cost American lives.[14] A similar reluctance to "bear any burden" also explains why the Clinton administration kept lowering the estimated cost of NATO expansion as ratification approached. Americans may favor expanding NATO, but not if it is going to cost them very much. And the same attitude is reflected in our recent response to terrorist leader Osama bin Laden: the Clinton administration rejected several plans for seizing him because they would have placed U.S. soldiers at risk, and chose instead to send *pilotless* cruise missiles against targets that could not directly retaliate.

To be sure, Americans still want to retain military superiority, but support for our present level of defense expenditure is unlikely to survive the generational changes noted earlier and the fiscal constraints that loom ahead.[15] Barring the rise of a major and direct threat to U.S. security, U.S. military power will continue to erode. And with that decline will come even greater reluctance to engage in potentially dangerous international activities.

Thus, a powerful set of domestic and international forces is pulling the transatlantic alliance apart. The process may be delayed by adroit statesmanship and bureaucratic inertia, but a gradual parting of the ways is virtually inevitable.

The Dorian Gray Alliance

WARTIME ALLIANCES rarely survive the enemy's defeat, and in that sense NATO is already something of an anomaly. Its members remain committed to mutual defense even though the threat that brought them together has vanished, and they are trying to sustain a high level of policy coordination even though their interests and goals are gradually diverging. NATO has redefined its mission and is in the process of taking on new members, a process that has been strongly endorsed by the U.S. Congress and the American people.

These events would seem to cast doubt on any gloomy prognosis for NATO. If the divisive forces described above are present

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[12]See Ole R. Holsti, "Continuity and Change in the Domestic and Foreign Policy Beliefs of American Opinion Leaders", presented at the meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, 1997.

[13]According to a 1994 survey by the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 83 percent of Americans regard protecting the jobs of American workers as a "very important" goal, while only 24 percent believe that "protecting weaker nations from aggression" is equally important. Likewise, the percentage viewing "protecting allies" as "very important" has dropped from 61 percent in 1990 to 41 percent in 1994. John E. Rielly, ed., *American Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy 1995* (Chicago: Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, 1995).

[14]In October 1995, for example, the Gallup Poll reported that 69 percent of the respondents supported the U.S. deployment to Bosnia (with 29 percent opposed), *assuming* that no U.S. lives would be lost. When asked to assume that the mission would lead to twenty-five U.S. deaths, however, only 31 percent supported deployment and 64 percent were against it.

[15]In 1996 U.S. defense expenditures were roughly one-third of the world total. The United States spent 45 percent more than NATO Europe combined, nearly four times more than Russia, seven times more than Germany or China, and six times more than Japan. Military superiority is a good thing, but too much of a good thing is usually unhealthy.

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and growing, then what explains the persistence of the transatlantic ideal, and especially America's willingness to maintain or expand its world-girdling array of security commitments? I believe four factors are responsible.

First, the end of the Cold War left the United States in an unprecedented position of pre-eminence. Victorious great powers typically try to mold postwar worlds to suit their own interests and ideals, and the United States is not the sort of country that would pass up such an opportunity. Not every foreign policy elite gets a chance to remake the world in its own image, and the energetic internationalists in the Clinton administration have been especially vulnerable to this temptation. We *like* telling ourselves that we are the "indispensable nation"—to use Madeleine Albright's self-flattering phrase—and it even seems appropriate when the U.S. economy is strong and when the enormous military establishment acquired during the Cold War is at the disposal of our leadership.

Second, the United States is able to extend these new commitments because other states are only too happy to keep free-riding on American protection. Why should the Europeans do the heavy lifting when Uncle Sam is still willing to do most of the work? Why wouldn't Poland or Hungary want the prospect of U.S. protection, even if it is a guarantee that we don't really want to honor? The United States remains Europe's ideal ally, not least because we are an ocean away and do not threaten to dominate it. Although our allies resent our highhandedness and seek to rein in our impulsive excesses, for the most part they have been letting us have our way.

Third, keeping NATO together made good sense in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, if only because it was unclear how events in the former Soviet Union were going to evolve. We could not be certain that Russia would not get back on its feet and once again pose a direct threat to Europe, so keeping the alliance together was the prudent course until Russia's eclipse was unmistakable.

Finally, the Atlantic Alliance is heavily institutionalized, and no organization goes out of business quickly or willingly. Having been in business for more than four decades, NATO is now buttressed by a large formal bureaucracy and by an extensive transatlantic cadre of former NATO officials, defense intellectuals, military officers, and journalists, all of whose professional lives have been devoted to preserving the "Atlantic community." Ending the alliance would remove their main professional preoccupation and call a halt to the endless series of conferences that these elites have long enjoyed. It is therefore not surprising that they resist any hint that NATO is beginning to dissolve, or that they have labored hard to devise new ways of keeping it busy.

Given these four factors, one can envision an optimistic scenario in which the transatlantic partnership holds together and gradually expands, peace deepens, and prosperity grows. In this scenario, NATO may not have to actually do much of anything, so nobody in the United States minds and everything remains tranquil. This is precisely the vision that the Clinton administration has been counting on: expansion prevents conflict throughout Europe, and the United States never has to pay any real costs at all.

Unfortunately, this scenario is unlikely to weather the challenges that lie ahead. NATO's eastward expansion will provide new opportunities for disputes within the alliance, and we can expect to see repeated quarrels over how far and how fast to expand, and over who will bear the costs and risks of these new responsibilities. If the U.S. economy slows or goes into recession—as it eventually will—support for overseas commitments is likely to shrink sharply. And when one of these commitments eventually costs U.S. lives—as one did in Somalia—skeptics will be quick to ask whether U.S. vital interests are really at stake.

Most importantly, the passage of time will bring European and American differences into sharper relief. Consider the implications of China's continued rise. If China does emerge as a true great power in the next century, the

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United States is likely to take steps to contain its influence. Such a policy will require allies in Asia and the Pacific; but the Europeans are both less interested in this problem and have less to contribute to solving it. (Indeed, a revitalized Russia would be a more useful ally against a rising China, which is a good reason why the United States should not humiliate Moscow by expanding NATO ever eastward.)

The China example illustrates the fundamental problem once again: shorn of an overarching threat to compel Western unity, the United States and its European partners have less and less reason to agree. Although they retain certain common interests and will continue to cooperate on some issues, consensus will be neither as significant nor as automatic as it was in the past.

Instead, the Atlantic Alliance is beginning to resemble Oscar Wilde's Dorian Gray, appearing youthful and robust as it grows older—but becoming ever more infirm. The Washington Treaty may remain in force, the various ministerial meetings may continue to issue earnest and upbeat communiqués, and the Brussels bureaucracy may keep NATO's web page up and running—all these superficial routines will go on, provided the alliance isn't asked to actually do anything else. The danger is that NATO will be dead before anyone notices, and we will only discover the corpse the moment we want it to rise and respond.

THE WANING OF the transatlantic partnership is no reason to rejoice. NATO was a great source of stability during the Cold War, and its existence helped manage the potentially dangerous interregnum that followed the collapse of the Soviet empire. But nothing is permanent in international affairs, and NATO's past achievements should not blind us to its growing fragility. Instead of mindlessly extending guarantees to every potential trouble spot, and instead of basing our foreign policy on a presumption of permanent partnership, it is time for Europe and the United States to begin a slow and gradual process of disengagement. This is going to happen anyway, and wise statecraft anticipates and exploits the tides of history rather than engaging in a fruitless struggle to hold them back. □

Circumstances Alter Cases

New definitions:

1979 – Afghan = Mojaheddin = Holy warrior = Dead Russians = Good Thing.

1998 – Afghan = Taliban = International terrorist = Dead Americans = Bad Thing.

Nothing strange about this. It's called International Affairs. But should the UK have applied US rules of engagement about terrorists, then we would have bombed the hell out of Noraid centres, which raised funds for the IRA in the U.S. long ago. Same situation, different zippers, as they say in the White House.

The Oldie, London (September 1998)

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Russia's Crisis, America's Complicity

Dimitri K. Simes

THE APPOINTMENT of the Primakov government in September represents more than a change in personalities or a shift in Russian economic policy. It reflects profound changes in Russian politics, some of which have serious implications for the United States.

Since its first days in office the Clinton administration has made "strategic partnership" with Russia a focal point of its foreign policy. But the administration's interpretation of strategic partnership has gone far beyond what is conventional in state-to-state relations. It has included de facto intervention in Russia's domestic politics on behalf of President Boris Yeltsin and the so-called "radical reformers", particularly former acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar and former First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais.

Of course, as long as Boris Yeltsin remains Russia's president, he deserves to be treated with appropriate respect and attention. And it was only natural that Gaidar's and Chubais' enthusiasm for the economic prescriptions of the U.S. Treasury Department and the International Monetary Fund should be appreciated in Washington. But the Clinton administration has not merely favored Yeltsin and the radical reformers; it has acted as if their success would, almost by definition, be good not only for Russia but for the United States as well. As a result, President Clinton and his advisers have gone well beyond whitewashing Yeltsin's personal transgressions—including his excessive drinking and his propensity for grandstanding—and have consistently urged him to stay on course with radical reform at almost any cost.

No truly democratic government would ever have dared impose on its citizens measures as harsh as those implemented by Yeltsin. Despite this, and after the predictable backlash, the administration endorsed Yeltsin's unconstitutional dissolution of the Congress of People's Deputies in 1993, his shelling of the Russian White House (where the parliament was located), and his virtual imposition of a new constitution granting the Russian president almost dictatorial powers. The administration clearly gave priority to its notion of economic reform over democracy, and to Yeltsin's personal fortunes over respect for Russia's constitution—and over the obvious U.S. interest in the establishment of political checks and balances that would discourage a future Russian autocracy from returning to an aggressive foreign policy.

Later, in 1996, the administration deployed IMF loans in such a way as to help Yeltsin win re-election, and then portrayed his victory as a triumph of democracy. This proclamation came despite the fact that Yeltsin's campaign team rendered legal spending limits meaningless through massive violations; used

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the federal treasury as a campaign war chest; exploited its de facto control over the media to undermine not only the Communists but all of Yeltsin's rivals (even Grigory Yavlinsky, the leader of the impeccably pro-reform Yabloko party); pressed local officials to deliver the vote to Yeltsin, even through fraud; and concealed his heart attack on the eve of the election from Russia's voters.

As a result of its unstinting support of Boris Yeltsin, the administration developed an enormous stake in his success and the success of his radical reformer protégés. The appointment of the Primakov government thus came as a double blow: it came about at the initiative of opposition politicians in the Duma; and, for the first time since the collapse of the USSR, the Russian government did not include any of the administration's favorites.

Not On the Shoulders of Titans

YEVGENY Primakov was appointed prime minister after the humiliating failures of his two predecessors, Sergey Kiriyenko and Victor Chernomyrdin. Kiriyenko, dismissed in August, had announced Russia's de facto devaluation of the ruble, its ninety-day moratorium on the repayment of debts to foreign creditors (the equivalent of a default), and its unilateral restructuring of short-term state bonds (known as GKOs). He replaced Chernomyrdin, who was fired in March to allow for "new blood."

Despite Yeltsin's claim, however, Chernomyrdin's original dismissal had little to do with a sense that the Russian government needed new energy and momentum. While there certainly was such a need, politics rather than policies played the decisive role. By now it is clear that Yeltsin and his entourage had become resentful of Chernomyrdin, who seemed increasingly to be a real second-in-command with an independent power base and ever more obvious presidential aspirations. But the Russian prime minister fatally miscalculated Yeltsin's willingness to tolerate his growing prominence. Whoever became too visible under the aging and insecure president was bound to activate his self-protective instincts. With little or no warning, Chernomyrdin was dismissed in March less than one month after his return from high-profile meetings with Vice President Al Gore in Washington.

In retrospect, Yeltsin's decision to fire his prime minister of five years appears to have been largely spontaneous. This is demonstrated by the Russian president's initial announcement that he himself would temporarily assume the duties of prime minister, followed only hours later by the appointment of the relatively unknown thirty-five year-old energy minister, Sergey Kiriyenko, as acting prime minister. Although there have been numerous attempts at after-the-fact rationalization of Kiriyenko's appointment—highlighting his youth, competence, commitment to reform, and pragmatic approach to politics—the mechanics of his arrival make clear that its principal purpose was to unseat the powerful Chernomyrdin. Kiriyenko, a former Komsomol leader and then business executive in Nizhniy Novgorod brought to Moscow by Boris Nemtsov in 1997, had served only a few months as a minister and was a virtual unknown to Yeltsin.

Kiriyenko's eventual confirmation by the State Duma was predictable. After two strong but nevertheless pro forma rejections, the deputies overwhelmingly approved Kiriyenko's candidacy in the face of threats to force new elections with revised rules unfavorable to the opposition. Transparent suggestions by the president himself that he would "take care of the deputies' needs" if only they would cooperate also helped.

Ultimately, though, the Russian constitution, narrowly approved in a questionable referendum held after Yeltsin's 1993 assault on the Supreme Soviet, was the decisive factor. It allowed Kiriyenko to assume office in an acting capacity prior to his confirmation, and also ensured that if the parliament rejected Kiriyenko in a third vote, the Duma would face dissolution. The new Duma, too, would still have to vote on Kiriyenko, if not a less

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palatable presidential appointee. Although the opposition would perhaps have won additional parliamentary seats if it had forced new elections, the Duma has so little power that the opposition's strength is of little relevance if Yeltsin feels confident enough to ignore the legislature. Yeltsin had also put opposition leaders on notice that he might abolish by decree the current system of proportional representation in any new parliamentary elections. This would significantly damage the smaller parties, particularly Yabloko, which has a substantial nationwide electoral base but could win few races in single-mandate districts outside Moscow, St. Petersburg, and a few other major cities. Because the Duma would be unlikely to vote for such a change, Yeltsin could probably not have introduced it constitutionally—but with his record of acting outside the constitution, his threat had enough credibility to sober the opposition into submission.

Kiriyenko won almost instant endorsements from the Clinton administration and the IMF. Their quick support for the new prime minister could hardly have been based on his reformist record—he had served as a cabinet minister only since the previous November, when he replaced his political mentor, Boris Nemtsov, as energy minister. Nor was Washington's satisfaction based on any displeasure with Chernomyrdin, with whom the administration had worked amicably for years. Instead, the fulsome praise for the new Russian government seemed to reflect the Clinton administration's predisposition to find something positive in almost any move taken by Yeltsin on one hand and, on the other, its trust in assurances from Nemtsov and former First Deputy Prime Minister Chubais, whom Yeltsin had just appointed to head Russia's electricity monopoly, United Energy Systems of Russia. The fact that another radical reformer—Yegor Gaidar—was a key unofficial adviser to the Kiriyenko team also reassured the administration and its proxy international financial institutions.

The near euphoria in Washington was, however, totally divorced from realities in Russia. Once Kiriyenko was confirmed, Yeltsin lost his leverage over the Duma, which by then was deeply resentful at having been railroaded into approving the young appointee. It was thus very unlikely that the Duma would cooperate with the new radical reform government and, without crucial legislation, the government was unable to implement significant new policies. The new government, even more than previous ones, was forced to turn to reform by decree. But this failed to assuage the concerns of skeptical foreign investors, undermined the legitimacy of the political system still further, and did little to improve Russia's economic condition.

Thus, despite their monetarist rhetoric—which fell on enthusiastic ears in the U.S. Treasury Department and the IMF—Sergey Kiriyenko and his team had no realistic economic program. The government could not simultaneously rationalize Russia's tax system and respond to IMF pressure to improve tax collection, even though the latter was objectively necessary. This was especially true as the drive to save money by whatever means possible, including forced cuts in the country's social safety net and the non-payment of wages and pensions for months, further strained the government's relations with the State Duma. That in turn made the necessary tax legislation even less likely, because many deputies, including those committed to reform, perceived tax collection efforts—such as widely publicized raids by hooded tax inspectors armed with automatic weapons—as either arbitrary or politically motivated attacks on opponents of the government and its allies. Pressure to increase tax receipts also stifled the development of Russia's cash-starved businesses and scared off foreign investors, whom Moscow often saw as an easy source of additional revenue. But in an economy in which about 60 percent of cash turnover occurs beyond the reach of tax authorities in the shadow economy, and in which 75 percent of transactions take place

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through barter[1]—a new tax system was of much more fundamental importance than an improvised, one-time improvement in tax gathering. As in the case of Gaidar's government, the Kiriyenko government (which Gaidar advised) proceeded in a cavalier fashion with hastily conceived radical measures implemented in an authoritarian style. It never developed a systematic approach to what is, after all, a very complex problem.

Chaos and Collapse

RUSSIA'S FINANCIAL collapse was a logical result of the policies of the Chernomyrdin and especially the Kiriyenko governments, which had relied heavily upon foreign borrowing to sustain federal budget expenditures. As oil prices continued to fall and Western investors simultaneously began to pull money out of Russia to cover their losses in the Asian financial crisis of 1997, the Russian government was forced into greater borrowing at escalating interest rates. GKOs were offered at such high rates of interest—up to 150 percent when inflation was still at a relatively low level—that there was little incentive for Russia's banks, or investors in general, to put money into production. Without that investment, however, there could be no growth in income to allow for the repayment of Russia's mounting debts. At the same time, it became increasingly expensive for the government to support the overvalued ruble. The result was a typical pyramid scheme. When the Kiriyenko government was finally forced to devalue the ruble, it found that it—and Russia's banks—could no longer meet their international obligations.

Key radical reformers, including Chubais, have admitted to understanding what was happening and what the likely consequences of Russia's economic policy manipulations would be.[2] Nevertheless, in the best Russian tradition, they hoped against hope that somehow, something would happen to resolve the crisis—or that the Clinton administration and the IMF would again step in to offer a way out. But it was too late. The resulting chaos and collapse of the ruble led quickly to the further decline of Russia's GDP, a new wave of inflation, consumer hoarding and shortages, unemployment, and accelerated capital flight. The fact that a reformist government that enjoyed particular confidence in the West took such drastic measures and produced such dire results compounded the damage to Russia's international credibility. Chubais' admission that he and the Russian cabinet deliberately deceived the IMF and foreign investors alike about the weakness of the Russian economy delivered a further blow.[3]

Chubais later maintained that while he and his colleagues in the Kiriyenko government misled foreign investors, they did not deliberately lie to the IMF. This Clintonesque denial is not without a certain element of credibility. IMF and particularly World Bank officials in Moscow were quite skeptical of Russian assurances. After having my own conversations with then Central Bank Chairman Sergey Dubinin and Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov, I was convinced that devaluation was inevitable and that only Russians' traditional faith in miracles gave the Kiriyenko government hope that it could be avoided. It appeared that senior Russian officials felt that they had no alternative but to delay devaluation until after the announcement of the July IMF credit package in order to fulfill the expectations of the Clinton administration's top decisionmakers on Russia policy, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Larry Summers, who were eager to maintain the façade of Russian economic progress. This was more a mutually agreed pretense (undertaken to avoid alarming the U.S. Congress)

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[1]Grigory Yavlinsky, "Whither Russian Reform?", remarks at The Nixon Center, September 25, 1997.

[2]Yevgeniya Albats, interview with Anatoly Chubais, "Anatoly Chubais: We Should Expect One and a Half to Two Very Difficult Years", *Kommersant-daily*, September 8, 1998.

[3]Ibid.

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than it was a unilateral deception.

The bubble predictably burst, but not until the first $4.8 of the $22.6 billion IMF-led bailout announced in July had been wasted supporting the value of the ruble and protecting Russia's top banks, which were controlled by the country's new oligarchy. There was much finger-pointing; many, including the IMF and President Yeltsin, claimed to be "shocked, shocked" at the collapse.

WHEN KIRIYENKO was fired, most in Moscow seemed to assume that the candidacy of Victor Chernomyrdin would sail through the Duma. Chernomyrdin had the support of most of Russia's oligarchs—including Boris Berezovsky, who took public credit for the appointment—and, in addition to being on fairly good terms with Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov, he was generally acceptable to the country's regional leaders. Two regional governors with presidential ambitions of their own—Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov and Krasnoyarsk Governor Alexander Lebed—also offered important early support.

According to Moscow political analysts, another strength of the former prime minister's candidacy was that despite having been fired by Yeltsin, he could be counted on to protect the president's interests. This triggered speculation that Yeltsin's declining physical and mental health might lead him to cede some power to the prime minister and possibly even to the parliament. Yeltsin's entourage signaled as much in preliminary discussions with Duma officials. Soon, however, the Russian president demonstrated—as he had many times before—that unless pushed into a corner he would not compromise his personal power, and that no redistribution of authority could take place until he stepped down or was incapacitated. The Duma was thus being asked to confirm Chernomyrdin in a situation in which—given his strong presidential ambitions—he could first protect Yeltsin and then inherit his broad powers. Not surprisingly, the Communists and a number of other factions quickly backed away from supporting Chernomyrdin on those terms, and his prospects for confirmation collapsed.

Yevgeny Primakov's appointment as prime minister after the Duma's rejection of Chernomyrdin avoided a new sharp confrontation between the president and the parliament. Had Chernomyrdin been rejected a third time, Yeltsin would have been bound by the constitution to dissolve the Duma. However, because the Duma was planning to initiate impeachment proceedings against Yeltsin—which, according to the constitution, would prevent its dissolution—the situation could have resulted in a constitutional crisis. Such a crisis would have been much worse than that of October 1993, as no one would have been sure what the demoralized, divided, and underpaid Russian military—or Russia's increasingly assertive regional governors—would have done during such a standoff. Moreover, Yeltsin's options were severely limited by his unprecedented unpopularity after the August financial collapse.

This was a part of the rationale for the suggestion of Primakov as a compromise candidate by pro-reform economist and Yabloko faction leader Grigory Yavlinsky. He and others in the Duma were also delighted to demonstrate that the legislature could no longer be ignored. But Yavlinsky refused to join in the government once it became clear that it would be an eclectic coalition representing a variety of approaches. Included in it were Gorbachev-era officials such as Yuri Maslyukov, a former head of the Soviet planning agency Gosplan, and Victor Gerashchenko, a former Soviet banking official who served as the first chairman of Russia's Central Bank.[4] Embarrassingly, two members of the pro-Chernomyrdin Our Home is Russia party also refused to serve after being appointed publicly by Yeltsin: Duma Deputy Speaker Vladimir Ryzhkov and the faction's leader in the Duma, Alexander

[4]Mikhail Rybyanov, "Grigory Yavlinsky: 'In Russia, of Two Evils, We Chose Both'", *Komsomolskaya pravda*, September 18, 1998.

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Shokhin, who joined the government only to resign after a few days. This made it more difficult to assume that the Primakov government could rely upon the support of reformers in the parliament.

SINCE PRIMAKOV came into office without a program or a background in practical economics, his disjointed cabinet has had considerable difficulty developing a coherent economic package while the Russian economy continues to decline. The good news, though, is that since Primakov was appointed through a compromise, there has been no immediate strong opposition to him. Fearing a further unraveling of the situation, most major political figures, including Mayor Luzhkov and Governor Lebed, have offered the new prime minister their support. At the same time, the Duma's role in Primakov's selection has given the new prime minister greater freedom from Yeltsin's destabilizing meddling than any of his predecessors enjoyed.

Simultaneously, the Russian people—tired, confused, and preoccupied with their own survival—appear to be in no mood to start a new revolutionary uprising. But Russian revolutions have often started in spontaneous and unpredictable revolts. In a nation with a constitutionally powerful but personally weak president and a disaffected, disillusioned population, even a fairly limited rebellion could start a chain reaction, especially if the fragmented Primakov government cannot find a way to halt skyrocketing inflation and limit shortages.

To their credit, no important Russian political party—including the Communist Party and Vladimir Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party—has adopted the Bolshevik slogan of 1916-17, "the worse, the better", and bet on victory through social upheaval. Curiously, the radical reformers have come the closest to adopting this position, through Chubais' apparently calculated admission of hoodwinking the IMF and Boris Fyodorov's call for no further IMF assistance to Russia immediately after the failure of his own attempt to remain in the cabinet.

In many countries, certainly most democratic countries, a crisis of the magnitude of the August-September 1998 events in Russia would have resulted in a comprehensive change of leadership. But in Russia, where Yeltsin is a declining czar rather than a hands-on chief executive, a change of government may do if Primakov and his aides are able to avoid completely alienating foreign investors and cutting off Russia from most international assistance. It is also possible if the situation continues to deteriorate that Primakov may be able to reshuffle the government and include responsible reformers in key positions.

The good news about the Primakov cabinet, as Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has observed, is that "Russia now has a government with a mandate from both the parliament and the president."[5] While the inclusion of ministers associated with the Communist and Agrarian factions in the government makes it more difficult for the cabinet to develop a coherent pro-reform program, to the extent that it is possible to do so such a program may garner more support in the Duma than any previous government initiative. At the same time, because the Duma can no longer excuse its obstructionism by pointing to the contempt with which the executive treats it, it finds itself under pressure to cooperate constructively with the cabinet. This creates an opening for economic change to be implemented through legislation rather than less credible presidential and government decrees—if the Primakov team manages to get its act together.

In the long run, the success of this dialogue is important to establishing a viable democratic system in Russia. More immediately, it may be essential in avoiding a social explosion. Much is at stake here for both

[5]"Address by Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright to the U.S.-Russia Business Council", October 2, 1998, *USIS Washington File*, www.usia.gov.

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Russia and the world; while new turmoil is possible but still not probable, its consequences could be so profound that trying to avoid—or at least not to facilitate—such upheaval should be a priority for the United States in dealing with a Russia on the brink.

The American Stake

IN THIS context, it was appropriate for Secretary Albright to advise against "taking a census of reformers in the Kremlin." Still, the secretary of state could not resist the temptation to do precisely that by expressing doubts about the Primakov government, saying, "We can only wonder if some members of Primakov's team understand the basic arithmetic of the global economy."[6] She was similarly unable to conceal her disappointment that America's radical reformer protégés were no longer in government.

As the secretary also said, though, Primakov is "a forceful, straight-talking advocate of a major power's national interests."[7] The new Russian prime minister has a long record of dealing with the United States as an adversary during the Soviet period as well. But attempts by some to demonize him as an anti-Western Arabist or a KGB agent are an oversimplification. First, even if he had worked for the old KGB, he would have been employed in a foreign intelligence capacity—not as a political policeman. Given that Yeltsin himself is a former party apparatchik, it is hypocritical to become exercised over the new prime minister's old KGB contacts.

Second, and more to the point, it is clear that while a person with Primakov's illustrious career had to have close ties to the KGB, it is very unlikely that he was ever a staff officer. If there were any firm institutional rules in the post-Stalin Soviet Union, one was that the party was above the security services and, therefore, that party personnel could not work for the KGB. As a correspondent for *Pravda*, the official party newspaper, in Cairo in the 1960s, Primakov was a part of the Central Committee *nomenklatura*. Because he was directly supervised by the International Department of the Central Committee, it would have been highly unusual for him simultaneously to take orders from the KGB. Lieutenant General Vadim Kirpichenko, a retired first deputy chief of foreign intelligence for the KGB, confirmed this in a recent book, where he wrote that *Pravda* correspondents such as Primakov maintained "close professional contacts" with KGB station chiefs but "could not be engaged for cooperation."[8]

Primakov's appointment, like so much else, seems to have taken the Clinton administration off guard. In all likelihood this was not a result of dark suspicions about Primakov personally; after all, Secretary Albright and others in the administration know him well and, despite obvious disagreements, feel that they can do business with him. The real problem for the administration is that because the Primakov government came into power as a result of a compromise between Yeltsin and the parliament, it has enjoyed greater autonomy than any previous Russian cabinet and has been much more representative of opinion in the Duma and in Russia in general. As a result, it is less interested in guidance from Washington than were Yeltsin's protégés among the radical reformers.

For years the Clinton administration has paid lip service to the importance of promoting democratic reform in Russia. Its policies of promoting strict monetarism and crony privatization, however, have actually frequently worked in the opposite direction by limiting economic growth and the development of a legal framework for a free but regulated market. Almost since its inception in late 1991, radical economic reform has triggered a strong popular backlash in Russia. Sensing public

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[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Sergei Maslov, "Lieutenant General Vadim Kirpichenko Says in His Book: Primakov is Not at All Characterized by an Idiotic Standing on Principle", *Komsomolskaya pravda*, September 12, 1998.

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opinion, sizeable majorities in both the old Congress of People's Deputies and the Duma have consistently opposed radical reform.

Despite this opposition, Yeltsin was in a position to ignore the legislature and appoint governments of his own choosing responsible only to himself. This was particularly true after the adoption of the December 1993 constitution, which provided him with enormous powers. However, the Russian president was able to ignore parliament only at the double cost of further polarizing Russian society and encouraging obstructionist behavior by the Duma.

Nevertheless, the Clinton administration consistently urged Yeltsin to follow U.S. Treasury and IMF recommendations no matter the social and political consequences. This encouragement—backed by detailed conditions established for IMF credits—often went beyond policy advice to include not-so-subtle suggestions about which specific individuals should occupy key positions in the Russian cabinet and even on Yeltsin's personal staff. According to knowledgeable Russian sources, President Clinton himself coached Yeltsin on several occasions about the importance of retaining such administration favorites as Chubais and former Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev in the government. The administration thus put its desire to influence the Russian president's policies above the development of democracy in Russia. At the same time, the administration's strict adherence to its own somewhat arbitrary vision of what constituted reform in Russia actually undermined the economy's prospects for growth. The continuing lack of legislation became a serious obstacle to foreign, and even domestic, investment; few investors were willing to commit their money in the absence of a reliable legal framework. The deadlock between the government and the Duma was similarly an obstacle to tax reform—another problem that must fall to solution if Russia is ever to put its financial house in order.

The failure to attract investment and to raise tax revenues made Yeltsin uniquely dependent upon the good will of the outside world, particularly the United States, which was rightly seen as having a decisive influence over IMF lending decisions. As a result, there are now strong suspicions in Russia that Washington deliberately sought to keep it on its knees by forcing it to accept destructive economic policies. While there is no evidence that the Clinton administration was either capable or desirous of so Machiavellian a policy, senior administration officials certainly must be aware that, notwithstanding the rhetoric of partnership advanced by both sides, there could be no genuine equality in the relationship between a powerful donor and a beleaguered recipient.

Primakov's Prospects

IN CONTRAST TO its rhetoric, deep down the administration has also acted as though it shared Henry Kissinger's observation that, "In Russia, democratization and a restrained foreign policy may not necessarily go hand in hand."[9] In fact, President Clinton and his advisers supported Yeltsin not only because of naive romanticism, but also because of a perfectly pragmatic—if shortsighted—calculation that he was prepared to subordinate Russian foreign policy interests to Western, and especially American, preferences to a much greater extent than the parliament or the Russian public at large. For example, it is hard to imagine that a Russian government responsive to popular sentiment would have sent military units to serve under NATO command in Bosnia, as Yeltsin did, when NATO launched air strikes solely against Orthodox Serbs despite strong Russian claims that each of the parties in the conflict had committed excesses. Similarly, it is unlikely that such a government would express willingness to participate in the international monitoring effort in Kosovo essentially on NATO terms.

[9]Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), p. 221.

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The underdevelopment of democracy in Russia and the resulting broad autonomy of the Russian president have thus helped the Clinton administration to win Moscow's acquiescence to U.S. foreign policy actions that it may otherwise have strongly opposed. From this standpoint, the emergence of the Primakov government, which relies on parliamentary support from the Communists (among others), was bound to make the administration think twice. Administration officials were forced to ask how the new Russian cabinet would respond if the United States were to take the lead in organizing a NATO air campaign against Serbia in response to Slobodan Milosevic's brutalities in Kosovo. Use of the Russian UN Security Council veto became a real possibility for the first time in years. It was by definition much easier and more predictable to make arrangements with only Yeltsin and his lieutenants.

Similarly, the Primakov government is likely to be less open to U.S. Treasury and IMF guidance on how to manage Russia's economy. Taking into account how deeply flawed that advice has been thus far, this may to some extent be a blessing. It has also already become clear that the Primakov government has had great difficulty putting together an economic program; the new prime minister has emphasized several times that he is not a magician. His is not a cabinet looking for bold new approaches—whether toward or away from the free market through large-scale re-nationalization. Muddling through is the best one can realistically expect from his cabinet—and even that will not be easy.

Russia's new government has inherited a banking system near collapse, spiraling inflation, negative economic growth (a 5-6 percent decline in Russia's GDP is projected by the Russian Central Bank for 1998), and severely undermined investor confidence. Some $17 billion in debt is due in 1999 and there is no chance that Russia will be able to raise sufficient revenue to avoid—to put it delicately—restructuring its obligations. It is clear that difficult economic times are still ahead and that conditions will become worse before they get better.

Nevertheless, on the positive side, key members of Primakov's economic team, including Central Bank Chairman Victor Gerashchenko, First Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Maslyukov, and Finance Minister Mikhail Zadornov, are all pragmatic and competent professionals. They are capable of heading off disaster or, at a minimum, of adjusting their policies if disastrous consequences become evident. Moreover, the government's relationship with the Duma may allow the passage of long overdue legislation on property rights, bankruptcy, tax reform, and other key issues. Like the Primakov cabinet itself, that legislation is bound to be imperfect, contradictory, and disappointing to many. But it would still be a modest step in the direction of rebuilding sagging investor confidence.

As the relatively mild demonstrations on October 7 suggest, the government's ties to the Duma will also be helpful in avoiding social upheaval. Given that one of the most essential—if not *the* most essential—U.S. interests in Russia is the avoidance of anarchy or civil war in a nation with thousands of nuclear warheads, whatever contribution the new government makes to reducing that likelihood should be welcome.

Relatedly, it is important to recognize that the Primakov government may smooth the transition to the post-Yeltsin era as well. Yevgeny Primakov has several advantages in this respect. First, he is on good terms with both Yeltsin and the opposition. Second, he is a master of political maneuver and a skillful survivor. Third, and perhaps most important, because he has no constituency of his own—and no known presidential ambitions—he is generally viewed as a caretaker. This perception helps significantly to calm tensions in a period when Yeltsin—while maintaining both his enormous constitutional powers and his strong attachment to them—is increasingly unable to exercise effective leadership.

Solutions to Russia's broader problems will have to await new elections to the State

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Duma in 1999 and for the presidency in 2000. But, for the first time, the Communists and their allies may be forced to bear some of the responsibility for the Russian government's policies. Should the government go too far in implementing retrograde policies under pressure from the Communists, pro-democracy and pro-reform parties in the parliament, such as Yabloko, may have an important opportunity to increase their electoral appeal and exercise greater influence on the government (or even join it).

Still, even assuming that Russia can muddle through until the post-Yeltsin era, the United States will have to accept that Moscow's willingness to walk in lock step with it on foreign policy matters is increasingly a thing of the past. Russia's limited resources and continuing dependence on the West will of course discourage any responsible government from confronting America over issues that are not vital to Russia, including Kosovo and Iraq. But if a perception of hostile American intentions begins to guide Russian foreign policy, attempts to counteract U.S. policy would likely follow even before Russia regains its feet economically.

IT IS NOT EASY for Americans, particularly in our current triumphalist mood—which has been only slightly dented by the impact of the global economic crisis—to appreciate the perceptions that U.S. conduct is generating in Russia. American actions such as NATO enlargement, resistance to Russian influence over pipeline routes out of the Caspian Basin, efforts to discourage Russia from sharing weapons and high-technology with those who do not play by the rules internationally, and the imposition of strict conditionality on international economic assistance to Russia make sense individually on their merits. But collectively these policies contribute to a widespread impression that the United States is deliberately exploiting Russia's historic vulnerability. These steps have been seen by some as the aggressive expansion of a hostile military alliance, an attempt to restrict Russian access to key oil resources and lucrative investments, an effort to monopolize the international arms and technology markets, the hypocritical use of military force against Russia's Serbian friends, and, through offering assistance on conditions that prevent economic growth in Russia, a policy intended to keep the country weak and dependent upon the West.

This is certainly not a fair picture of U.S. intentions or, for that matter, Clinton administration policy. But that is beside the point. What matters is whether Russian public opinion sees U.S. policy as an effort to bring Russia to its knees—and increasingly it does. Also, while the administration cannot be accused of deliberately undermining Russian reform, it was not above taking advantage of Moscow's continuing weakness—to which its policies contributed—to marginalize it on a variety of international issues. With regard to NATO air strikes against Yugoslavia, for example, Secretary Albright said, "If force is required, then we will not be deterred by the fact that the Russians do not agree with that." Such an attitude, and the behavior resulting from it, only contributes to the development of a "Weimar Russia" psychological syndrome, the avoidance of which must be a priority for U.S. policymakers.

That syndrome will only be enhanced if the administration opts for pre-emptive abandonment of Russia, out of a combination of fear and self-righteousness not dissimilar to that with which some of its members once advocated pre-emptive appeasement of the Soviet Union during the days of Moscow's imperial glory. Despite the rhetoric of continued engagement, Strobe Talbott suggested recently that Washington might wash its hands of Russia unless the Primakov government agrees to follow IMF guidance.[10] Strikingly, Talbott's remarks lacked any

[10] "Talbott Urges Strategic Patience Toward Russia", speech at Stanford University, November 6, 1998, *USIS Washington File*, www.usia.gov.

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reflection about the U.S. role—and his personal complicity—in Russia's predicament. Moreover, he knows that Primakov could not deliver on this demand without provoking a major conflict with the Duma; that a large part of a second IMF loan installment would be used to repay previous ill-conceived IMF loans (for which the administration cannot escape responsibility); and that the consequences of a collapse in Russia far surpass the danger of wasting $4.3 billion. Talbott's remarks appear to be either a reflection of indignation at Russia's refusal to follow his advice, an attempt to create an alibi in the event that the administration finds itself in a "Who lost Russia?" debate, or possibly both.

IT MAY BE difficult to focus on Russia's long-term potential to assume a major role in the international system when the country is seemingly trapped in an almost catastrophic economic crisis. Russia today is in a uniquely weak international position; its military is not ready for combat and its economic ordeal clearly reduces its options in foreign policy significantly, and Russians recognize this. A Russian proverb describes their understanding of the current situation: *ne do zhiru, byt' by zhivu* (do not worry about getting fat when you are struggling to stay alive).

But it would be a mistake for the United States to interpret Russia's current weakness as endorsement of America's effort to shape a new international system around itself. Russia is biding its time until it is able not only to express its preferences but also to do something about them. While it may be some time before Russia can significantly constrain American foreign policy, approaching the country realistically means recognizing that it may have a much more serious impact on the world a few years hence.

In this context, National Security Adviser Samuel R. Berger was wrong to claim that NATO air strikes against Serbia would not "affect [America's] fundamental relationship with Russia."[11] At the present time, when Russia is exceptionally weak and is desperate for foreign assistance (ranging from the next tranche of the July 1998 IMF credit package to food aid from Europe and the United States), Moscow does have limited options in responding to whatever NATO does in Yugoslavia. But there will be a reaction sometime, somewhere—and perhaps on a matter of greater importance to America than events in Kosovo. Accumulated scar tissue on the Russian side from such perceived indignities will hardly add to the strength of what the administration has called one of America's most important bilateral relationships.

Nevertheless, it is true that under even the most optimistic scenarios for Russia's economic recovery, Moscow cannot regain its lost superpower status in the foreseeable future. And most serious presidential contenders—including Yavlinsky, Luzhkov, Lebed, and even Zyuganov—appreciate the unique role of the United States in today's world and understand that needlessly alienating Washington could have devastating consequences for their country. Thus, a great deal will depend on American policy toward Russia and, more generally, on U.S. global strategy in the twenty-first century. Russia alone is not likely to be able or willing to mount a serious challenge to American predominance. Likewise, there is no potential for Russia to become the focal point of a new coalition against the United States—although it could facilitate such an effort by others.

Thus, Russia could become a serious problem for the United States if the Clinton administration continues to try indiscriminately to run the world according to American preferences while still failing to take tough stands when it really counts. Such irritation without intimidation is very likely to generate a Russian backlash against U.S. global leadership, and this could be the case regardless of who replaces Boris Yeltsin. □

[11]Berger quoted in Philip Smucker, "Serbs Seen Rallying Around Milosevic", *Washington Times*, October 12, 1998.

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Kosovo: Only Independence Will Work

Noel Malcolm

IF FLAUBERT WERE alive today, he would be taking a special interest in Western policy on the Balkans. He was always fascinated by a certain kind of accepted wisdom, which shades off into platitudes, clichés, and expressions of sheer stupidity—what he lovingly described as *la bêtise*. An updated version of his *Dictionary of Received Ideas* would have to include several new entries derived from Western policymakers during the Bosnian war: "*Balkan people*: full of ancient ethnic hatreds. Cannot stop fighting one another." "*NATO air strikes*: completely ineffective without the deployment of hundreds of thousands of NATO ground troops." "*Arming the victims*: creates a level killing field. Only prolongs the war", and so on.

More recent events would have added a couple of new entries: "*Kosovo, autonomy of*: must be restored." "*Kosovo, independence of*: dangerous and destabilizing; would lead to new Balkan war." These two received ideas are constantly affirmed by our politicians and diplomats; the more they are repeated, the less often anyone pauses to question their truth. How could a policy assumption be wrong, when the foreign ministry of every major power in the West is agreed about it? The Bosnian experience suggests that the answer to that question is: very easily. Some serious thinking is needed about the possibility of independence as a long-term solution for Kosovo. If, as I believe, the foreign policy establishment has got this issue completely wrong, the consequences, in terms of Balkan instability and costly Western involvement—to say nothing of the lives of thousands of the local inhabitants—could be severe.

Already, the West's insistence that autonomy is the only solution has generated problems, both for Western diplomacy and for the Kosovo Albanians. Despite the self-congratulatory spin that Western governments put on Richard Holbrooke's October agreement with Slobodan Milosevic, it is clear that major concessions were made to the Yugoslav president. (Perhaps the most important was the abandonment of plans to have NATO-controlled observers backed up by NATO firepower; instead, the unarmed observers are controlled by the OSCE, a notoriously toothless, amorphous, and politically manipulable body.) Holbrooke was in fact in a very weak negotiating position. The message his political masters were sending to Milosevic was: "We shall attack your forces in Kosovo, going to war, in effect, on behalf of the Albanians against you—and then, when we have defeated your army, we shall turn round to the Albanians and tell them to go back under your rule, with a little regional autonomy to keep them happy." Milosevic must have known that this was illogical, and therefore he must also have known that the threat of military action could be heavily discounted.

Now that the deal has gone through, however, the illogicality is simply transferred

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to the West's dealings with the Kosovo Albanians. For more than six months American diplomats were preoccupied with getting the Albanians to form a united negotiating front. After the Holbrooke-Milosevic agreement was signed, the diplomats' aim has been to persuade those Albanians to negotiate for autonomy, and nothing more. But since the vast majority of Albanians in Kosovo want independence (having voted massively for it in an unofficial referendum as long ago as 1991), any local politician who signs up to mere autonomy now will be discredited, and perhaps even targeted in the first stirrings of a potential civil war. By insisting on a commitment to autonomy, Western diplomats will polarize Kosovan politics and undermine precisely those moderate Kosovo Albanian politicians whose role they most need to strengthen. It looks like a new application of the principle of "divide and rule": the West gets to divide the Kosovo Albanians, and Milosevic gets to rule them.

THE WAY out of these immediate problems, and the way toward a genuine long-term settlement, lies in rethinking, from first principles, the accepted arguments on autonomy and independence. These can be divided broadly into two categories: arguments about the intrinsic justifiability of independence, and arguments about its consequences. Let us take the intrinsic arguments first.

The main claim here is that Kosovo simply has no right, in constitutional or international law, to independence. The outside world has recognized (in, for example, the wording of Security Council Resolution 1199) that Kosovo forms part of the territory of a sovereign Yugoslav state; and as the diplomats never tire of repeating, the West is not in favor of changes to international borders. But these objections are precisely the ones that were made in 1991, when Slovenia and Croatia demanded independence. Eventually Western governments recognized those countries, having discovered that this involved not so much a change of borders as a change in the status of existing borders: the lines on the map remained the same, but their status was upgraded from republican to national.

Could Kosovo qualify for the same treatment? The answer, in terms of constitutional and international law, is that it could—and, indeed, that it should have been offered independence when the old Yugoslavia broke up in 1991-92. Under the Yugoslav constitution of 1974 Kosovo was equivalent in most ways to Slovenia, Croatia, and the other republics. True, its position—as an "autonomous province"—was not identical to theirs: in theory it had a dual status, being defined both as a component of the republic of Serbia and as a component of the federal Yugoslavia. But in practice it exercised the same powers as a republic, having its own parliament, high courts, central bank, police service, and territorial defense force; it was formally defined (from 1968 onwards) as part of the federal system, and it was represented directly—not via the Republic of Serbia—at the federal level. By all normal criteria of constitutional analysis, Kosovo was primarily a federal unit, and only very secondarily a component of Serbia.

In 1991 the European Community set up a committee of jurists, the Badinter Commission, to advise it on the break-up of Yugoslavia. The commission's key finding was that the whole federal system was in a process of "dissolution." In other words, what happened when Slovenia and Croatia became independent was not secession, not the falling away of a few branches from a continuing trunk; rather, the whole federal state dissolved into its constituent units. (The present-day "Yugoslavia" is not the continuation of the old Yugoslavia, but a new state, formed by the coming together of two units, Serbia and Montenegro.) Unfortunately, the Badinter Commission never said which units were the constituent ones, and Western governments simply made a policy decision to regard only the six republics as such—thus treating Kosovo as a wholly owned subsidiary of Serbia. Possibly they were influenced by the

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fact that, by this stage, Milosevic had already stripped away Kosovo's autonomous powers. But if Serbia's right to rule Kosovo is to be based on the mere fact that Milosevic had downgraded its status just before the break-up of Yugoslavia, it will rest on very shaky foundations, as the relevant constitutional changes were pushed through under extreme duress, with tanks in the streets and war planes roaring overhead.

The other intrinsic argument against independence for Kosovo is historical, not legal. Most Western diplomats seem to believe that Kosovo is an essential part of historic Serbian state territory, so that to remove it would be as bizarre as separating Yorkshire from England. This argument too is false.

Kosovo was not, as Serbs claim, the "birthplace" or "cradle" of the Serb nation, and it came under Serb rule for only the last part of the medieval period. Since then it has been excluded from any Serb or Yugoslav state for more than 400 out of the last 500 years. It was conquered (but not legally annexed) by Serbia in 1912, against the wishes of the local Albanian majority population, and it became part of a Yugoslav kingdom (not a Serbian one) after 1918. In other words, out of the entire span of modern history, Kosovo has been ruled from Belgrade for less than a single lifetime.

Of course it is true that the national mythology of Serbia—a mythology developed largely by nineteenth-century ideologists—sets great store by the historic importance of Kosovo, thanks to the site of the famous battle of 1389 and the presence of some important medieval monasteries, including the Patriarchate. But modern political geography cannot be determined by old battlefields, however symbolically charged they may be by the defeats incurred at them; if that were so, France would claim Waterloo, and Germany Stalingrad. Similarly, if modern borders had to bow to religious history, Kiev would be part of Russia and Istanbul part of Greece. Any independence deal for Kosovo would naturally have to include guarantees on the protection of cultural and religious sites; but that is a separate issue, and not such a hard one to resolve.

Aside from those intrinsic arguments, the Western diplomats also argue against independence for Kosovo on the grounds that it would set risky precedents or have dangerous consequences. A common claim is that if Kosovo gained independence, the Serb-ruled half of Bosnia, Republika Srpska, would also be entitled to break away from Bosnia. As Warren Zimmermann recently noted in these pages, "U.S. officials are particularly worried that Western acceptance of an independent 'Kosova' would destroy the Dayton agreement on Bosnia, which is based on integration, not separation" (Summer 1998).

But those officials are making a completely false parallel between the two cases. As explained above, Kosovo's independent statehood would be based on the fact that it—just like Bosnia—had been a unit of the old federal Yugoslavia; Republika Srpska never was such a unit, and indeed was granted legal status for the first time only in 1995, on the strict condition that it remain part of a sovereign Bosnian state. For most of modern history the territory of Republika Srpska has been an integral part of a Bosnian entity, whereas Kosovo has been legally attached to a Serbian entity only for the last fifty-three years.

The other argument involving precedents or consequences is about Macedonia, which has its own large Albanian minority. It is said that independence for Kosovo would encourage the Macedonian Albanians to carve off a territory of their own from the Macedonian state. In fact, the leading Albanian politicians in Macedonia make no linkage between independence for Kosovo, which they support, and a carve-up of Macedonia, which they do not want. One obvious reason why they do not want it is that more than 200,000 Albanians live in the capital, Skopje, which would certainly be left in the Slav half of any partitioned Macedonia.

But there *is* a different and real danger. A long, simmering conflict in Kosovo would

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gradually radicalize the Albanians of Macedonia, as their young men crossed the mountains to fight. Some of them would return home imbued with the wild rhetoric of "Greater Albania", which certainly exists in some branches of the Kosovo Liberation Army. Such radicalization would undermine the responsible political leadership that represents the Macedonian Albanians today; eventually, fighting could develop in Macedonia too. And the cause of this radicalization process—a long, simmering conflict in Kosovo—is precisely what Western policy guarantees when it denies to the Kosovars the one thing, independence, for which they are still determined to fight. Thus Western policy, which aims above all at preventing the destabilization of Macedonia, will create precisely the outcome it most fears.

WHAT, THEN, can be done? Independence cannot come immediately to Kosovo: that would be too much of a shock to Serb pride, and would provoke a violent response. In the very long term, however, Kosovo will certainly be separated from Serbia; even some Serb nationalists concede this, when they compare birth rates and calculate that Albanians will outnumber Serbs in the whole of Serbia by the mid-twenty-first century. The solution, then, must lie in the medium-term—something along the lines of the settlement that ended the war in Chechnya, with a long interim period of autonomy leading finally to full self-determination. Conditionality could be built into such an agreement: to qualify for the eventual move to independence the autonomous Kosovo would have to satisfy key conditions, such as respecting the rights of the Serb minority and abandoning any territorial ambitions outside the present Kosovan borders. Such a solution would restore authority to the moderate Albanian political leaders, drawing support back toward them and away from the hardliners in the Kosovo Liberation Army. The continuation of the West's present policy on the other hand, far from solving Kosovo's problems, will only make them—and those of the whole Balkan region—far more lethally insoluble in the future. □

Nothing New Under the Sun

Dwight Macdonald once wrote a note on "Wallese"—"a debased provincial dialect" spoken in Wallaceland, "the mental habitat of Henry Wallace plus a few hundred thousand regular readers of *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, and PM. It is a region of perpetual fogs, caused by the warm winds of the liberal Gulf Stream coming in contact with the Soviet glacier."

While that glacier has now melted away, some of what Macdonald wrote about Wallese still hits the spot in the age of Clinton and Blair:

"The adjective 'new' is much used, as: 'new horizons', 'new frontiers', and 'the new democracy' (which means the old democracy minus all democratic elements). Like 'adventure', another important word in Wallese, it suggests something Different (and God knows we're sick of what we've got now), Positive, Exciting; something, in short, to which the old critical categories, which have proved so lethal in the hands of Irresponsible and Destructive critics, cannot be applied."

Quite so.

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Foreign Policy and Domestic Scandal

Peter W. Rodman

ON OCTOBER 20, 1973, an Arab-Israeli war was still raging in the Middle East when the "Saturday night massacre" occurred in Washington. President Nixon's firing of Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox precipitated the resignation of Attorney General Elliot Richardson and his deputy, and accelerated the impeachment process that ten months later drove Nixon to resign. The domestic uproar over the "Saturday night massacre", in turn, was still raging four days later when the Soviet Union threatened to intervene unilaterally in the Arab-Israeli war, leading the United States to place its armed forces on a dramatic worldwide alert. That wasn't all: the total Arab oil embargo against the United States was declared on the very Saturday of the "Saturday night massacre." In addition, Washington was still reeling from the unprecedented resignation-under-a-cloud of Vice President Spiro Agnew on October 10—four days after the Arab-Israeli war began.

It was a busy time, and it carried an important lesson: that foreign challenges do not necessarily ease up to allow the United States to play out its domestic dramas. Today, with the Cold War behind us, the stakes may not be as high. Nevertheless, the international challenges we now face—whether the spreading world economic crisis, Iraq, Kosovo, or North Korea—still cry out for American leadership, and domestic preoccupation with a scandal cannot but have consequences.

Nixon's extreme case—which I had the misfortune to witness at close hand—illustrates the variety of potential problems that can arise in a scandal-weakened presidency. President Clinton seems to have dodged the bullet on the face of it; the November 3 election results demonstrated his remarkable political resilience. Yet the scandals dogging him and the impeachment process have (at this writing) not entirely run their course—and there has already been a discernible impact on foreign policy.

The problems, or potential problems, arise in four categories: foreign perceptions, distortions of U.S. policy-making, presidential distraction, and executive-legislative relations. Let us take them in turn.

Foreign Perceptions

THE FIRST KEY question that has to be asked is how do foreign leaders, adversaries and friends alike, assess a scandal-weakened president, and how are their actions affected by their perception?

First of all, adversaries: are they more tempted to challenge a president in such circumstances? In the case of the October 1973 alert, I think not—though some of the participants in the U.S. decision definitely feared it

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at the time.[1] In retrospect, it is more likely that the Soviet threat to intervene was triggered by Mideast events—specifically, the desperate plight of the surrounded Egyptian Third Army—than by a Watergate temptation. The Soviet leadership, indeed, retained a healthy respect for Nixon until virtually the end of his presidency. Nixon had earned a reputation for being fierce, gutsy, and unpredictable: in May 1972 he had resumed the bombing of North Vietnam—the biggest American escalation of the Vietnam War—two weeks before a scheduled summit in Moscow. The Soviets never really understood what Watergate meant (constitutional government not being their forte, for one thing), and they had a hard time believing Nixon was as weak as he really was. To a great extent, the United States was bluffing it through the last year and a half of Nixon's tenure.

Another factor that Nixon had going for him was a heavyweight team. In October 1973 Henry Kissinger was his secretary of state and national security adviser, James Schlesinger his secretary of defense, Brent Scowcroft the deputy national security adviser, and Alexander Haig the White House chief of staff. Throughout the October 1973 Middle East War, American policy retained its decisiveness. At times, it was Nixon himself who took the lead (he decided boldly on the U.S. airlift to Israel, for example); at other times, as in the deliberations that produced the alert, the team developed a strong policy which Nixon approved.

The reader can judge whether President Clinton had a reputation for being formidable in foreign policy before Monica Lewinsky burst on the scene, and whether his national security team is of comparable quality. Some observers noted that Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin seemed to have some of the requisite prestige to play such a role in the international financial crisis. Long before Monica, however, concerns had been raised about the administration's strategic seriousness and its track record as a failed experiment in Wilsonianism.[2] This administration has displayed several disturbing tendencies—for example, a temptation to indiscriminate humanitarian military intervention coupled with Vietnam-era inhibitions about using force decisively, and a habit of deference to an international consensus rather than a confident assertion and pursuit of American strategic interests.

Thus much of its stumbling when faced with classical hard-ball challenges—Somalia, Iraq, North Korea—has been a matter of philosophy, not just bad luck. And in the past year, it cannot be excluded that adversaries like Saddam Hussein, Slobodan Milosevic, and Kim Jong Il judged the President to be further weakened and shaped their policies accordingly. This could well have been a factor in Saddam's decision to escalate his assault on the UN inspection regime, in Milosevic's decision to crack down in Kosovo, and in North Korea's lobbing of missiles over Japan and threats to scuttle the 1994 nuclear agreement.

But what about friendly countries: how do they react to a weakened president? The Clinton administration's successful mediation in both Northern Ireland and Israeli-Palestinian diplomacy in 1998 was obviously not prevented by the scandal. But in the prolonged Middle East mediation, before its successful completion at the Wye Plantation, some distortion was apparent. A number of (contradictory) concerns were frequently expressed: Would the President be too weak to put the necessary pressure on the parties (particularly Israel)?[3] Would he, conversely,

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[1]Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1982), p. 584.

[2]See, for example, Michael Mandelbaum, "Foreign Policy as Social Work", *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 1996), and Peter W. Rodman, *America Adrift: A Strategic Assessment* (Washington, DC: The Nixon Center, 1996).

[3]Assuming that one believes greater pressure on Israel was what was called for. I have a different view; see my "Mideast Burnout", *National Review*, August 3, 1998.

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put *more* pressure on the parties (again, particularly Israel) because he was desperate for a diplomatic success? Or would the Mideast leaders, once the President's personal prestige was so engaged at Wye, be less willing to cross him, or more willing to accommodate him, given his precarious condition? Mr. Clinton's own calculation is impossible to assess, but the responses of the Mideast parties can be inferred. Friendly countries have a stake in the United States and are usually not eager to weaken it. Nor are friendly leaders in the habit of distancing themselves from a president unless he looks truly terminal. Nixon made a successful visit to Middle East capitals as late as June 1974. (Kissinger is of the view, though, that our North Atlantic allies were wary of Nixon from late 1973 onward and that this complicated a European-American initiative that the administration had launched.[4])

Clinton was also buoyed in September by a remarkable standing ovation at the UN General Assembly. While this was a vote of confidence of some sort, it may in fact have been a more complex phenomenon. Many leaders in the audience, understandably fearful of a further weakening of American foreign policy, may have accepted his interpretation that he was America's champion of sophistication and internationalism under fierce assault by Republican Yahoos and isolationists. (If so, it was a crude caricature of the American political scene—an almost anti-American reason for applauding an American president.) Some leaders in the audience also may have found rather disturbing the quaint American notion that a head of government is accountable under the law just as any other citizen.

In any case, as noted, Nixon too was widely respected by world leaders—probably more so than Clinton.

American Policy-Making

A SECOND SET OF issues has to do with how such a domestic crisis can distort American policy-making. One paradigm of this is the "Wag the Dog" phenomenon, referring to the Hollywood movie—released around the turn of last year coincidentally with the Monica Lewinsky revelations—about a president who manufactures a war in order to divert attention from a sex scandal. No American president, including Nixon and Clinton, has been guilty of such an offense, but it is a useful rubric for a number of different but related problems.

The 1973 Mideast alert, again, provides examples. One of the motivations of the alert, in the minds of some of the Americans involved in the decision, was self-consciously to demonstrate to all and sundry that the United States was *not* weakened by Watergate and was still capable of acting firmly.[5] The alert was fully justified on its merits as a response to a bald Soviet threat, but policymakers were fearful that American credibility might be in question. This constituted an element of distortion in the equation even if in this case the policy decision was objectively correct.

The dilemma was compounded by the cynicism of the media. The day after the alert, Secretary Kissinger held a news conference to explain the dramatic events of the night before. A battery of questions zeroed in on the theme: How do we know this wasn't a stunt to divert attention from Watergate? In a poisoned political climate, the preoccupation of the press corps makes such a reaction almost inevitable. Similar press questions were raised in 1998 with respect to the cruise-missile strikes of August 20 against terrorist targets in Afghanistan and the Sudan.

Thus, a domestic crisis can whipsaw an administration: perhaps adding to its inhibitions about strong action on the one hand, while simultaneously fueling credibility problems abroad that might indeed seem to call for extra boldness to demonstrate U.S. resolve. It is complicated, agonizing, and not at all healthy.

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[4]Kissinger, pp. 733-4.

[5]Ibid., pp. 584, 589.

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A Distracted President

A THIRD (and related) category of problem is how much of a president's attention and energy is in fact distracted, if not drained, by having to deal with a domestic scandal. Some such effect is inevitable. Nixon, as noted, was stalwart in 1973 in deciding on a U.S. airlift to Israel but he was quite preoccupied during the aforementioned alert, which came only four days after the "Saturday night massacre." The team of his senior advisers met in the White House Situation Room, while the White House chief of staff left the room periodically to speak to the President and to get his approval for key decisions.

Indochina provides the most consequential example. The Paris Agreement on Vietnam was signed in January 1973; within about a week, North Vietnam was blatantly violating the agreement by resuming transport of men and materiel down the Ho Chi Minh Trail. In March Nixon was on the verge of ordering a military retaliation, in the form of a four to five-day bombing campaign against the Ho Chi Minh Trail to demonstrate that the United States took the agreement's obligations seriously and would enforce them. But the retaliation never took place. Nixon, for the first time, lost his nerve. John Dean had just been in the Oval Office threatening, in effect, to blow his presidency sky-high, and E. Howard Hunt was demanding hush money. This retaliation-that-never-happened was one of the most important events in the history of the Vietnam conflict.[6] It was the dog that didn't wag.

So while the Soviets did not challenge Nixon, the North Vietnamese did—testing both him and his successor Gerald Ford over the next two years, only to discover that, indeed, a weakened presidency meant they were home free.

Today, Iraq is the closest analogy. The Clinton administration's unwillingness in early 1998 to fight for the UN inspection regime had all the earmarks of a government that had no stomach for a crisis—either a crisis with Saddam, a crisis with our allies, or a new controversy at home. The administration took the line of least resistance—allowing UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to broker a "compromise", and then backing away from "provocative" inspections. The result was the hobbling of the UN inspection regime—an ominous turning point in the world community's long-running struggle with Saddam Hussein. The belated bestirring of U.S. resolve in November produced a tactical success, but the status quo ante of 1997 is irretrievable. The weakening of our grip over Saddam in 1998 is perhaps the most serious price paid for Monica Lewinsky.

Congress and the President

THE FOURTH, and potentially the most lasting, consequence of a domestic crisis is the impact it can have on the balance of power between Congress and the president. This is the most important bullet Mr. Clinton has dodged. In Nixon's case, this impact doomed Indochina, gave impetus to an era of congressional ascendancy in foreign affairs from which we have still not fully recovered, and even undermined our policy toward the Soviet Union.

Indochina was definitely a casualty. Nixon had won re-election in November 1972 with one of the biggest landslides in American history, and had done so moreover in an election fought over Vietnam policy above all other issues. Yet by the spring of 1973, the administration began losing anti-war votes on various resolutions and appropriations bills in Congress that it had always won previously. Certainly there are other possible explanations for the legislative setbacks—cumulative public fatigue over Vietnam; the failure of Nixon's coat-tails to ensure him a supportive Congress in 1972—but Watergate was crucial. In mid-June 1973 the Senate Watergate Committee heard from John Dean, in days of televised hearings that trans-

[6]Ibid., pp. 315-27.

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fixed the nation. Nixon's political position was crumbling. In late June, Congress imposed on Nixon a complete ban on any future U.S. military action "in, near, or over" Indochina—prohibiting not only any future attempts to enforce the Paris Agreement but also the continuation of U.S. assistance to Cambodia in that country's desperate resistance to the Khmer Rouge. In November 1973 the War Powers Resolution became law over Nixon's veto. He had lost his clout.

As for Nixon's Soviet policy, I will try not to reopen the hoary "détente" controversy, except to note that Nixon had had a national consensus behind him during 1971-72 when his policy toward Moscow was at its high point (a Berlin agreement, the China breakthrough, much-applauded arms control agreements, and the first-ever Moscow summit). But in his second term, challenges emerged to arms control, and East-West trade was linked to human rights, while the U.S. defense budget continued to be cut by a liberal Congress and Indochina was abandoned. Thus, both the carrots and sticks of U.S. policy toward the communist world were being eliminated by a congressional assault. (The abandonment of Angola came in 1975, under Ford.) The Left turned against the attempt to improve East-West relations over the issue of human rights; the Right launched the assault on arms control while refusing to back a conservative administration against the challenges from the Left.

Whatever one's view of the policies, it is clear that Nixon had dominated all these contradictory forces in his first term. He had held his conservative base and moved successfully to the center. In his second term, he lost his grip as he was engulfed from both directions. With the carrots and sticks of his strategy gone, in an important sense it was no longer *his* Soviet policy that was being carried out. One of the most brilliant masters of the political game ever to hold the highest office, Nixon had lost control over his own foreign policy, and over events. These, too, were the wages of Watergate.

In Mr. Clinton's case, the November 3 election results obviously show no such impact—except to the perverse degree that the Republicans' mishandling of the scandals backfired against them. The balance of power between the President and Congress remains essentially unchanged. But that status quo is a Congress controlled by the opposition. As Mr. Clinton slides into lame-duckhood, his clout is likely to weaken further, compounded by whatever residue of the scandals remains. Remember that some of the scandals have a foreign policy connection, such as the illegal foreign campaign contributions and the House and Senate investigations of compromising technology transfers to China. The Republicans will not be shy about pressing their national security agenda, especially on major issues like China and Iraq. There is also a range of other contentious issues—intervention in Kosovo and Bosnia; North Korea; Russia policy; UN arrears; treaties that the Senate has opposed (Kyoto, Comprehensive Test Ban, ABM Treaty amendments); trade and IMF; missile defenses; and more. An administration that is accident-prone because of fundamental flaws in its approach to the world is likely to face growing congressional pressures, scandal or no.

As acknowledged at the outset, the stakes today are not as high as during the Cold War. There is no Vietnam to lose. But there is a difference in philosophy between the two parties—not internationalism versus isolationism, as some would have it, but the Republicans' more geopolitical view versus the administration's Wilsonianism. Whose vision will prevail? What would be the consequences of a prolonged stalemate between the two branches?

Monica Lewinsky wanted to influence education reform. Whether or not she achieved that, she has had an impact on our foreign policy. □

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Can Japan Come Back?

Peter Hartcher

BY THE TIME the bombing stopped and the smoke cleared, Japan's total economic losses from World War II amounted to the equivalent of about one year's national output. That tally included everything that could have a price put upon it—the factories and the flamethrowers, the homes and the howitzers, the silos and the submarines. In modern values, the bill was 19.5 trillion yen or some 140 billion dollars.[1]

The bursting of Japan's "bubble economy" in 1990 started another extraordinary episode of wealth destruction. The war, of course, was incomparably more costly in human terms. But Japan's 1990s peacetime disaster of deflation has been vastly more expensive in an economic reckoning. Within five years—from 1990 to 1995—a period comparable to the length of the Pacific War, the collapse of land values and stock prices had inflicted losses equal to nearly *two* years' national output. The money value of these losses was 827 trillion yen or about 6 trillion dollars. It takes Uncle Sam four years to collect this much in taxes and it takes the Russian economy fifteen years to generate this much wealth. And Japan's losses are still mounting as land and stock prices continue their long downward trajectory.[2]

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The nature of the experiences differs. The wartime damage was chiefly physical, the peacetime losses financial. But the comparison brings into perspective the enormity of Japan's self-inflicted economic disaster, one more costly than losing a major war. And it raises the question: can Japan bounce back this time? A growing body of expert opinion says no.

Japan has been in stagnation now throughout the 1990s, the gloom punctuated only by the false dawn of 1996, when it seemed that recovery was nigh. The short-term outlook is poor enough. One of the more accurate forecasters of Japan's economy over the last decade, Nobuya Nemoto of the Nomura Research Institute, told me in June,

> We already have most of the necessary conditions for the recession to become a depression. We have a fragile banking system, a credit crunch, falling corporate earnings, companies

[1]The Economic Stabilization Board put the cost of wartime damage at 99.2 billion yen in 1945 prices. Adjusted for inflation, this is 19.5 trillion yen in 1995 prices. Inflation is measured by the Bank of Japan's wholesale price index. In 1945 the index stood at 3.5 and in 1995 at 687.3.

[2]The market value of land in Japan fell from its 1990 peak of 2,389 trillion yen to 1,823 trillion yen in 1994, a loss of 566 trillion yen according to the Economic Planning Agency. The value of all listed stocks over the period 1989-94 fell by 261 trillion yen, according to the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

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are pushing wages down, that is dampening demand, and prices are falling—this is the prototype of a depressionary spiral. A crash on Wall Street now may be enough to cause the recession to become a depression.

Since then, Wall Street has begun to show signs of obliging. "The worst of the adjustment may not be behind us", Nemoto added, "it may be ahead of us."[3]

The customary consolation for short-term misery is the prospect of longer-term prosperity. But the striking element of Japan's mess today is that there is no such guarantee. There is no light at the end of the tunnel, only an unrelenting blackness. Until the bursting of the bubble, Japan's rate of economic growth had fallen significantly below 3 percent only once in thirty years. But now the Ministry for International Trade and Industry (MITI) estimates that even if the country manages to emerge from recession, its maximum potential growth rate until the year 2010 is a pathetic 1.8 percent, and a miserable 0.8 percent thereafter. And that is one of the more optimistic assessments.

One of Japan's foremost economic think tanks foresees at least a quarter century of stagnation—or worse. A nonprofit affiliate of the Nikkei newspaper group in Tokyo, the Japan Center for Economic Research, this year issued its regular outlook for the Japanese economy over the next twenty-five years. It projects near-zero growth for the next few years and then a long period of gradual but unrelenting shrinkage in Japan's economy. Or, as Warburg Dillon Read's chief economist in Tokyo, Brian Rose, puts it, "I don't think there is going to be a happy ending to the Japan story. I think the current stagnation is as good as it gets—these are the golden years. Everything points to Japan sticking with its current line of policy, which is stagnation. And a very long period of stagnation."

History, Karl Marx said, is economics in action. If so, then what would a long Nipponese stasis imply? "Think of it this way", suggests the regional economist for Prudential Bache Securities in Hong Kong, Robert Rountree:

> Britain has been in decline since World War II. So what's the big deal about Japan entering the same phase? The UK lost the chemical, motorbike, and steel industries and now it's in the process of losing the finance industry as it's bought up by foreigners. Britain has lived off its savings through the current account surplus.
>
> People are worried about Japan because it is a paradigm shift. But once the Japanese invest overseas again and start earning nice fat returns on their investments, just as the Brits do, things will settle down again. Unfortunately, the cost of this shift could be a world recession.

In Japan's Foreign Ministry, a senior official explains that the new reality of a no-growth economy will transform Tokyo's global strategy:

> We have been trained in a linear track mentality. We have now come to the end of the line and we have to adjust. We have to re-set our national goals in this new climate. We have been aiming in the long term to be a superpower. We now have to learn to live comfortably as a power—not a superpower. We have been aiming to alone represent Asia. Because of China's growth and our stagnation, we have to now recognize that this is unrealistic. We have to learn to be modest about our capacity and the limits of our power.

The Clinton administration appears to accept the inevitability of Japan's long-term relative decline. Bill Clinton's trip to Beijing this year was the first time in the postwar period that a U.S. president had visited China without also visiting America's key security ally in the region and Asia's economic superpower. Assuming that this was studied rather than inadvertent, one can surmise that the President was acting on expectations of the future status of the big Asian powers rather

[3]This and all other unattributed quotations are taken from personal interviews.

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than current realities, as Japan is not only America's chief security partner in Asia but has an economy five times the size of China's. To borrow the jargon of the market, Japan is trading at a big discount to its face value.

But is this assessment correct? The world has consistently underestimated Japan's powers of transformation. Japan is a dribble of small islands spattered along the eastern coast of the Asian mainland. It has a population the size of Pakistan's and only half that country's land area. It does not have the natural resources to support its population in first-world lifestyles. It produces only 64 percent of its people's food needs and just 20 percent of its energy requirements.

Yet consider a few of its accomplishments in the past 130 years. After the Meiji Restoration of 1868, Japan became the first Asian country to master the techniques of the Industrial Revolution. In the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 it became the first Asian nation to crush a European power by force of arms. In its imperial sweep south in the Pacific War it single-handedly drove the European powers out of their sprawling Asian colonies and briefly occupied a third of the globe.

After World War II it grew rapidly from insignificance to account for one dollar in every six generated by the world economy. When *The Economist* in 1964 dubbed Japan Asia's first "miracle" economy, it seemed to be no exaggeration. Then, when the United States went on its 1980s debt binge, Japan systematically financed the U.S. federal deficit to help prevent an explosion in American interest rates. From a pauper nation it emerged to become the world's major creditor, with today almost a trillion dollars in net external assets. Japan compressed into thirty years the economic development that the United States accomplished in a hundred.

Japan proved that it was possible to be Asian and rich. It became the inspiration for a continent, the model for all the developing countries of Asia. In this way, it contributed to immense improvement in the lives of half of humanity. The only factor as constant as Japan's powers of transformation has been the world's underestimation of its ability. Even after Japan struck the U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor with stunning force in 1941, there was a general American incredulity that the Japanese could have had the wit and audacity to pull it off—the Germans were widely thought to have put them up to it.[4]

What could have gone so badly amiss with this extraordinary country that experts at home and abroad are prepared to write it off for a generation or more? And are they right? Are Japan's problems really so intractable? Or are all these experts making a huge and costly miscalculation?

The System Survived

IN THE WEST, it is generally assumed that after World War II Japan completely rebuilt from the ground up. It is taken for granted that wartime destruction, Allied occupation, war crimes trials, the purge of 210,000 militarists, and the break-up of the *zaibatsu* industrial conglomerates dismantled the existing structures, allowing a wholly new economic structure to spring up. This is a fundamental misapprehension. While the end of the war was an important new beginning in many ways, there was solid continuity in two of the mainstays of pre-war Japan. One was the financial system. The other was the people who operated it—the finance bureaucracy. To understand this is central to understanding what is happening to Japan today, and what will happen there tomorrow.

While General Douglas MacArthur's occupation administration purged 210,000 people from public life, it purged only 2,000 from the civil service, and these targets were concentrated in the military bureaucracy and the oppressive Ministry of Home Affairs. The department that operated the economy and the financial system of the nation, the Ministry of Finance, lost just nine officials to

[4]John Dower, *War Without Mercy* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1986), p. 37.

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the purge. Its pre-war personnel and principles remained essentially untouched.[5]

As for continuity in Japan's financial system since that time, the most astute explanation available was supplied in 1977 by two former Finance Ministry officials in a deeply revealing essay entitled "Dissecting the Finance Ministry-Bank of Japan Dynasty."[6] They wrote,

> We believe that the economic system which until now has supported high growth is fundamentally a continuation of the wartime system of total mobilization of economic resources. . . . Financial controls constituted the core of the economic system for all-out war, as is made clear by the Bank of Japan Law. . . .
>
> Patterned after the Reichsbank law of Nazi Germany, the law was promulgated in 1942 as a consummation of the wartime institutions for the control of financial activities, and today it remains in existence as a fundamental part of the Japanese financial system, thirty-odd years after the end of the war. True, the bank's goal . . . changed from the execution of war to the achievement of economic growth in the postwar period, but the system itself, geared as it was to all-out war, remained intact in spite of Japan's defeat.

The Bank of Japan law was revised ultimately—but only last year, fifty-two years after the war's end. And it wasn't just the central bank law that survived the occupation. The two former finance officials continued, "A similar observation may be made about commercial banks. . . . It is indeed surprising that the banking industry alone retained the wartime structure, in the midst of the all-transforming economic growth of the postwar years."

The Allied occupation had decided to smash up the five biggest banks. But it withdrew the plan when the Cold War arrived in Asia in 1948 and U.S. Secretary of the Army Kenneth Royal stressed the importance of Japan's swift economic revitalization as a bulwark against Chinese communism. This decision to preserve the big pre-war banks intact, the essay continues, "proved to be an event of decisive importance to the subsequent evolution of the Japanese economy."

Another vital part of the system was made up of Japan's special-purpose policy banks:

> Playing a central role in the wartime financial regime were so-called special banks, such as the Industrial Bank of Japan. Some of them, like the Bank of Taiwan and the Bank of Korea, were shut down after the war, while others, like the Nippon Kangyo Bank and the Hokkaido Takushoku Bank, were reorganized as ordinary commercial banks.
>
> But established in their place were the Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan, the Japan Development Bank and the Japan Export-Import Bank. These newly created special banks controlled the bulk of fund flows until the mid-1950s in much the same way as did the old special banks during the war. The role of the Industrial Bank of Japan was to serve as the mainstay vehicle of financing Japan's wartime industry. In the postwar 'total-war' economy, this role was amplified rather than diminished.

The authors nominate two more instruments of economic control—the bureaucracy's close supervision of foreign exchange, and its power to police interest rates offered by the banks—to fill out the armory of available mechanisms that allow officialdom to conduct "total mobilization" of the postwar economy. In sum, they write, "postwar occupation reforms thus did not bring a complete liquidation of the old economic order. What the occupation forces achieved was a reorientation."

The identity of these two insightful officials? They had both left promising careers at the Finance Ministry to take university posts. One, Dr. Yukio Noguchi, flourished in academia. He is now one of Japan's leading acade-

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[5]Eisuke Sakakibara, *Beyond Capitalism: The Japanese Model of Market Economics* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993).

[6]Published in *Chuo Koron* (August 1977) as "Okurasho-Nichigin ocho no bunseki", and condensed in English in *Japan Echo*, no. 4, 1977.

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mic economists, a professor at the University of Tokyo. He went on to write a bestselling 1995 book, *The 1940 System*, based on the 1977 essay.[7] The other returned to the Finance Ministry. He is now one of the Ministry's two or three topmost officials. As the vice-minister for international affairs, Dr. Eisuke Sakakibara is Japan's chief international economic negotiator. The markets have nicknamed him Mr. Yen because of the power of his pronouncements on exchange rates. In his current job, he is obliged to defend the system he so incisively analyzed in 1977. This would not necessarily be a problem, except that he and Noguchi foresaw in their joint essay twenty-one years ago that the system would fail—indeed, that for the sake of Japan's future it *needed* to fail.

Out of Control

THE SO-CALLED 1940 financial system was a vital asset in Japan's postwar catch-up. But the moment Japan caught up, it became a liability. It was an asset because it marshaled the savings of the Japanese people into a closed system. It kept the rate of interest artificially low. It channeled these savings into selected industries. This was a competitive boon because it gave those industries—steel, machine tools, autos, shipbuilding, electronics—access to a big pool of low-cost money. These industries invested the money in bigger and newer factories and hired more workers to run them. A virtuous cycle took hold. The workers continued to bank their money at low interest rates; the system continued to funnel their money into the priority industries; and the priority industries continued to add more and more productive capacity.[8]

One might wonder why the workers saved so much, and why they kept putting those savings into bank accounts if they got such lousy returns on them. The answer to both questions is that they had little choice. Because the entire financial system was a giant cartel operated by the authorities, the banks did not compete aggressively to lend money to households. Restricted in their ability to borrow, families were obliged to save strenuously for the big-ticket items of housing and education. At the same time, they were forced to accept poor returns on those savings because the interest rates offered on savings accounts were virtually identical across the banking system; there were few safe investment alternatives in Japan for ordinary people; and it was very difficult to move money out of the country. In addition, obligatory pension schemes sequestered a chunk of workers' wages, increasing the level of savings. The workers were prisoners of the controlled financial system. This has been dubbed the era of the Bankers' Kingdom. The Japanese savings rate became one of the highest in the world.

This phenomenon of massive saving and investment in the private sector had a parallel in the public sector. The postal savings system channeled vast volumes of low-cost capital into the so-called *zaito* system, the Fiscal Investment and Loans Program. This program, administered by the Finance Ministry, plowed these savings into public sector investment. The program became so big that it was nicknamed the "second budget" and by the mid-1990s its annual investments were two-thirds the size of the national budget.

The companies that were on the receiving end of all this cheap capital started to do very nicely. They pushed out into the world marketplace and drew attention to Japan as an exporting power. But instead of handing profits back to their stockholders, they reinvested most of their earnings in adding yet more production lines and hiring yet more workers. In this way, savings generated investment, and the investment generated more savings. The system was absolutely essential to Japan's postwar catch-up. It was a crucial national asset.

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[7]The Japanese title was *1940 Nen Taisei* (Tokyo: Toyo Keizai Shinpo Sha, 1995).

[8]Kent Calder's *Strategic Capitalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993) gives this subject a thorough treatment.

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But then, in the second half of the 1970s, it started to become a national liability. As in the tale of the Magician's Apprentice, the mechanism, once in full swing, kept generating tremendous liquidity long after Japan needed it. The place started to flood and the Finance Ministry apprentices tending the machine did not have the wit or the power to stop it. Japan had caught up with the world's richest economies and the total war mobilization could now be called off—but it was not. The system continued to pile up far more savings than the economy could usefully invest. For example, in the five years from 1986 to 1990, net saving in Japan was the equivalent of 19.2 percent of total economic output as defined by GNP. But it took the equivalent of only 16.4 percent of GNP to satisfy the economy's investment needs. The rest—2.8 percent of GNP—was excess. This amounted to a cumulative $345 billion over those five years, which is, for perspective, roughly the size of the annual output of an economy like Switzerland's or India's.

So what happened to that excess $345 billion? Japan exported it as capital. The world noticed; the capital outflow found its dual expression as Japan's big wave of overseas investment and as its hugely disruptive trade surplus.[9] Remember the tsunami of Japanese investment in the United States in the 1980s? An investment banker later told how Mitsui Real Estate deliberately overpaid by $235 million to buy the Exxon Building in Manhattan just so that it could claim the record for the world's most expensive building.[10] Japan's trade surpluses became so jarringly big that it became a poisonous issue with many of the country's trading partners, including the United States.

Inside Japan itself, these chronic excess savings fueled the mad boom known as the Bubble Economy. The big companies that had borrowed so much for so long eventually outgrew the need for their traditional bankers in Japan. The best of them could now tap directly into the world's capital markets and no longer bothered dealing through the middleman banker. In 1985 corporate Japan raised 5 trillion yen on the capital markets, or around 36 billion dollars at current exchange rates. In 1989 they raised four times as much in this way. When they found they could raise money on the stock market at near-zero interest rates, many Japanese companies were completely carried away, raising the money not because they needed it, but because it was so cheap. Who needed to borrow from the banks at 5 percent when money was on tap virtually for free in the stock market?

Japanese companies became so flush with cash that they did not know what to do with it. It became common practice for big firms to raise cash from the stock market at a cost of around half a percentage point, and then put it on deposit at the bank where it earned 6 percent. In 1988, for instance, corporate Japan put 23 trillion yen or about 165 billion dollars on deposit at the bank. The banks were in a terrible dilemma. Their biggest borrowers had not only stopped borrowing money, they had suddenly become their biggest depositors. Desperate for new borrowers, the banks found people like Harunori Takahashi. A small-time businessman working from a Ginza backstreet, he found establishment banks pleading with him to borrow their money. In just four years, his tiny company with its staff of fifty, EIE International, borrowed 1 trillion yen or about 7 billion dollars. Takahashi claimed that there was no limit to the credit at his disposal. He snapped up hotels and resorts around the world and accumulated three corporate jets. The walls of his poky office with its peeling wallpaper were soon groaning under the strain of multimillion dollar French Impressionist masterpieces.

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[9]Richard Katz explains this in detail in *Japan, The System That Soured* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), particularly chapter 8.

[10]The total price was $610 million. It turned out to be, unsurprisingly, a bad investment at that price. Ted Rall, "A sprocket in Satan's bulldozer: Confessions of an investment banker", *Might*, no. 6, 1995.

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Takahashi's main financier? It was one of the special policy banks set up to finance Japan's postwar re-industrialization—the Long-Term Credit Bank. His top assistant and chief dealmaker, Dr. Bungo Ishizaki, later explained, "It got to the point where it was an embarrassment even for us. We did these bullshit feasibility studies with flowery words and some glorified numbers." The *arriviste* entrepreneur would then pass them to the ultra-respectable Long-Term Credit Bank. "They wouldn't even scrutinize it but would rip the cover off, put their own cover on it, and syndicate the damned thing", bringing other banks in on the deal, and backing yet another triumphal Takahashi acquisition. His lieutenant later admitted that the firm had never drawn up a plan for servicing its vast debts.

The company, EIE, is, of course, now finished and Takahashi is on trial for fraud. Now effectively insolvent, the once-mighty Long-Term Credit Bank has become a test case for Japan's bank crisis policy. It is now in the process of being nationalized as the only alternative to total collapse. The bank, Dr. Ishizaki explained to me, was "just looking for an excuse to shovel their money out the door and we provided that excuse." This experience was replicated manifold across Japan and throughout its banking system. Thousands of Takahashis borrowed trillions of dollars from banks as desperate as the Long-Term Credit Bank. An official study of the period, commissioned by the Finance Ministry, concluded in 1993 that Japan's Bubble Economy of the late 1980s could be classed with the Dutch Tulip craze, the South Sea Bubble, and the Roaring Twenties boom in the United States as one of history's great episodes of speculative madness.[11]

Spinning Wheels in the Ditch

SO IT WAS THAT Japan's magnificent liquidity machine for the financing of its "total war" economic mobilization achieved its aim, and then, unchecked, went on to drown Japan and the world in excess savings. The system is now being destroyed by its own processes. All the elements of the 1940 structure are, by design or by default, now coming undone. The revisions to the Bank of Japan Law, while thoroughly inadequate, will give the central bank more independence to run monetary policy in the best interests of balanced economic growth rather than a frenetic economic mobilization. Most of Japan's commercial banks are under extreme duress and many will fail. The dismantling of the banks that the Allied occupation had planned is now underway, not according to the fiat of Douglas MacArthur but by the laws of Charles Darwin. Already, one of the top twenty-one banks and a former policy bank, the Hokkaido Takushoku Bank, is gone. The special policy banks, too, will never recover fully. The Long-Term Credit Bank is worst hit and effectively finished, but none has escaped serious damage.

The controls that sustained the system are also in tatters. The closed nature of the structure is already a thing of the past. The so-called Big Bang deregulation of the financial system has flushed away the final vestiges of the old foreign exchange control law. This means that the Japanese saver, once a prisoner, is now at liberty to move his or her money in and out of the country at will—and the Japanese are making the most of this newfound freedom. In the three months following the removal of the last remnants of the old controls on April 1 of this year, there was a net outflow of 7.8 trillion yen or 56 billion dollars—a record for a three-month period.[12] Official control of interest rates, long since abandoned, has, however, been continued by an informal cartel agreement between the banks. This cannot last. Indeed, under the Big Bang, the closed club of Japan's banking sector will be opened to new players. Toyota, for instance, might decide it

[11]Ministry of Finance Research Committee, "The Mechanism and Economic Effects of Asset Price Fluctuations", Institute of Fiscal and Monetary Policy, Ministry of Finance, April 1993.

[12]Nomura Research Institute, "Capital Market Trends", September 1998, p. 6.

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wants a banking license, and under the new law it would doubtless qualify.

As for the finance bureaucrats who tended the machine even as it worked itself into a destructive frenzy, they are showing signs of paralysis. "The bureaucrats have been criticized so bitterly for the failure of the economy and for their scandals that it made them passive—they have become very pessimistic and very passive", says Dr. Yoshio Suzuki, formerly a senior central banker and chairman of the Nomura Research Institute, now a politician in the opposition Liberal Party. "It's true", says a member of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and himself a former Finance Ministry official, Kozo Yamamoto, "that the bureaucracy has stopped producing policies. They are not functioning normally. We had to push them to draw up the plan to the banking crisis, we had to insist. They came up with no ideas." A senior official in the Foreign Ministry concurs: "We in the bureaucracy were the greatest think tank in Japan. But today we are brain-dead—we exist like vegetables."

The collapse of the system should not, of course, come as a surprise to the finance bureaucracy. It was after all Dr. Sakakibara who saw in 1977 that the financial system had "at last begun to disintegrate", and understood that "monetary and fiscal controls cannot work where a strong demand for investment does not exist." Or, in other words, where there is too much saving and not enough investment. And it was Sakakibara, with Noguchi, who likened the postwar economy of Japan to a bicycle: "Unless one pedals fast enough, there is a danger the bicycle will fall over." The high-growth postwar economy, the "1940 system" catch-up model, was, they wrote, "a contradictory and unstable structure that could only be sustained by continued growth."[13]

They were right. The growth faltered, the bicycle is now in the ditch, its wheels still spinning. But these astute analysts did not see this as a tragedy for Japan, or as the end of the country as a great power. Instead, they saw it as a necessary precondition to a new beginning: "The transition to stable growth will be impossible without fundamental alteration to the economic structure."[14] The tragedy is that, rather than managed change, Japan has ended up with a savage Darwinian episode of selection through uncontrolled destruction and protracted recession. It has also exported its homegrown crisis to the rest of the world, and will go down in history as the point of origin for the international crisis now recognized as the riskiest period for the world economy since the Great Depression.

JAPAN REMAINS the same resource-poor country that cannot feed or fuel itself. But it also retains its vast reservoir of human talent and financial resources and the resilience that has, time and again, astonished the world with its regenerative power. The forecasters who have appraised its prospects so dismally all premise their pessimism on the assumption that there will not be significant reform of Japan's economy. All recognize that it has enormous potential. Japan will outlive its obsolete financial system and its catch-up economic model. And when it does, it will rise again. Anyone tempted into the fallacy of extrapolation, seeing Japan's future as nothing more than an unaltered continuation of its present trends, might remind himself of the recent history of the United States. In the mid to late 1980s, it was fashionable in Tokyo to write off the United States as a spent force.

Japan can and will rise again. The real questions are when it will do so, and how much more damage it will sustain in the meantime. The swing factor is policy choice. Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi has promised to "launch major reforms with the hand of the devil and the heart of Buddha."[15] He will need more—the cunning of Machiavelli, the persistence of Sisyphus, and the wisdom of Confucius. And he needs them all right now. □

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[13]Noguchi and Sakakibara, 1977.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Obuchi quoted in the *Australian Financial Review*, July 25, 1998.

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The Rise of English Nationalism

And the Balkanization of Britain

Robin Harris

THE CONTINUED existence of Britain as a medium-sized power with a more than medium-sized role has long been one of the given assumptions of international affairs. It is also a strategically crucial American assumption. Enthusiasts for the "special relationship" extol alleged Anglo-Saxon commonalities of culture, values, and understanding. For their part, the more *realpolitik*-ally minded emphasize instead Britain's unique status as a UN Security Council member with a first-rate professional army, and at the same time a country with no psychological inhibitions about accepting the realities of American world leadership.

But what if all that were to change? What if not just the institutions but the allegiances and even the identity of Britain were fundamentally to alter? Until quite recently such a hypothesis would have seemed risible. But suddenly it is not. For, though most of the rest of the world has not yet grasped it, Britain is now Balkanizing and, as elsewhere, the dynamic imperative in the process is changing national awareness.

The British, and especially the English, have traditionally considered themselves above nationalism. The Right has understood that as well as the Left. For example, in his *Dictionary of Political Thought*, Roger Scruton, Britain's leading conservative political philosopher, notes: "In the United Kingdom nationalism is confined to the celtic fringes, where it has been associated with movements for home rule in Ireland, Scotland and—to some extent—Wales. English nationalism is virtually unknown, at least under that description."[1]

Professor Scruton's judgment has an array of disparate evidence to support it. But one of the more revealing testimonies is provided by music. Here the uneasiness of the nation with reflective self-definition is quite apparent. The British national anthem is, for instance, an expression of loyalty not to the nation but to the sovereign—even though he is slightly ominously urged to "defend our laws and ever give us cause" to continue to sing "God Save the King." "Rule Britannia", composed in 1740, is a somewhat strange affair. It refers specifically to Britain's naval prowess ("rule the waves") and to its political freedom ("Britons never will be slaves"), but not to its cultural identity or geographical characteristics, or even its people. "Land of Hope and Glory", though evocative of patriotic pride for the wartime generation, is in essence just a celebration of imperialism: "Wider and still wider shall thy bounds be set; / God who made thee mighty, make thee mightier yet." It is, observably, the expansion that is celebrated, not the characteristics of the national identity expanding.

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[1]Roger Scruton, *A Dictionary of Political Thought* (London: Macmillan, 1996), p. 369.

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As for *English* nationalism, it has generally been a subject for ribaldry. This was so in Victorian times when Gilbert and Sullivan's "H.M.S. Pinafore" ironically extolled the First Lord of the Admiralty who, "in spite of all temptations to belong to other nations, remain[ed] an Englishman." And it was still the case in the 1960s, when in their comic "Song of the English" Michael Flanders and Donald Swan sought to remedy the lack of a suitable national song with a composition whose chorus line runs: "The English, the English, the English are best: I couldn't give tuppence for all of the rest"—a refrain that even the most enthusiastic anglophobe would admit to be self-mockery.

None of which, of course, is to suggest that the British in general, or the English in particular, have altogether lacked self-awareness. The apparent absence of introspection has often been a pose. But it began as a reflection of the reality that the British in their heyday did not need to assert their national identity because it was already so pervasive. And not just good manners but common prudence required that such power be cloaked in a degree of self-effacement.

When Britain's Empire bestrode the globe and the schoolroom maps were largely colored red, London was a vantage point for overseas advance, not a refuge for a threatened society in retreat. The mentality this induced still affects the outlook of the older generation of British politicians. In her memoirs, *The Path to Power*, Margaret Thatcher describes her first visit as a young girl from a provincial town to the metropolis:

> For the first time in my life I saw people from foreign countries, some in the traditional native dress of India and Africa. The sheer volume of traffic and of pedestrians was exhilarating; they seemed to generate a sort of electricity. London's buildings were impressive for another reason; begrimed with soot, they had a dark imposing magnificence which constantly reminded me that I was at the centre of the world.

The notion of London being "at the centre of the world" may already have been wishful thinking by the 1930s. But it was a pretty accurate description of geopolitical realities over much of the previous two centuries. In such circumstances, it was only natural that the constituent components of the British state—English, Scots, Welsh, and even on occasion Irish—were generally prepared to ignore their national differences. Britain thus became that very rare entity—a multinational nation-state.

Of course, it was never entirely harmonious. Not just Scots but even some die-hard English objected to subordinating their primary national identity in the wake of the 1707 Act of Union between England and Scotland. But the economic benefits arising from the removal of internal trade barriers reconciled all those actively prepared to exploit the new opportunities. Even the irreconcilables, alienated by religion and culture from the new dispensation, were less united than they have sometimes been portrayed. Nowadays historians recognize that the 1745 Jacobite rebellion—the last rising by the supporters of the Stuart cause—was about religion and the distinctive problems of the Scottish highlanders, not essentially about the fate of an as yet largely unformed "Scottish nation." As many Scots—perhaps even as many highlanders—fought on the "English" as on the "Scottish" side at the subsequent Battle of Culloden. It took the romantic genius of Sir Walter Scott to turn the highlanders into a quaint epitome of Scottishness—though arguably he and his later, more clod-hopping successors thereby did the Scots no favors by encouraging them to cultivate a mythic reality that a recent Scottish writer has described as "the Bogus State of Brigadoon."[2]

The Welsh, having been formally united with England since Henry VIII's reign, are accordingly even better integrated into the British framework. In fact, over the years

[2]Bill Jamieson, *The Bogus State of Brigadoon* (London: Centre for Policy Studies, 1998).

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most of Wales has been economically, socially, and culturally anglicized, sharing fully in the ups and downs of Britain's industrial economy and absorbing a large English immigration. Admittedly, the western part of Wales has retained use of its own distinct language. But the four-fifths of the Welsh population who only speak English regard the resolve of the Principality's dogmatically multiculturalist political elite to impose bilingualism as a tiresome and inconvenient obsession.[3] Language is thus tangential to the question of whether Welsh nationalism can properly be said to exist. Certainly, anyone who witnesses the reaction of the Welsh spectators at Cardiff Arms Park when Wales plays England at rugby will be conscious of pride and passion. And there is a distinctive religious, cultural, and political atmosphere which strikes the Englishman who ventures far beyond Offa's Dyke. But then something similar is true of Yorkshire, Cornwall, and other English outlying provinces too.

The Irish were always, of course, in a different category. To a greater extent than either Scotland or Wales, Ireland was subdued and colonized through the brutal assertion of English power. Moreover, the Irish question after the Henrician Reformation was both affected by and has itself constantly exacerbated the anti-Catholicism of the British state. Yet even so, today's Irish nationalists are wrong to portray the relationship between the Irish and English as exclusively one of struggle and repression. In truth, Ireland can as little shake off its English connection as the English can disentangle themselves from the fate of Ireland. One commentator, arguing the case (albeit tongue in cheek) for re-unification of the Irish North and South, but *within* the United Kingdom, has pointed out:

> A man from Mars would find it difficult to understand why there are two states in the British Isles in the first place. None of the usual ethnic or linguistic criteria for nationhood seems to apply in this [Irish] case. A glance at the current Irish cabinet reveals nine Irish surnames, six English or Scottish and one [de Valera] Spanish.[4]

There was moreover another, oddly perverse, effect of the tangled and treacherous Anglo-Irish relationship. This was that the perceived danger from Catholic Ireland long provided an element of ideological solidarity for Britain as a whole. During most of the days of Empire—until, in fact, the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829—Britain was a self-consciously Protestant state in which predominantly Protestant Welsh, Scots, and Ulstermen were its especially representative citizens. Of course, the later decline of Empire and the processes of secularization and liberalization would weaken those bonds. This is Linda Colley's influential thesis:

> As an invented nation heavily dependent for its *raison d'être* on a broadly Protestant culture, on the threat and tonic of recurrent war, particularly war with France, and on the triumphs, profits and Otherness represented by a massive overseas empire, Britain is bound now to be under immense pressure. . . . [T]he re-emergence of Welsh, Scottish and indeed English nationalism . . . can be seen not just as the natural outcome of cultural diversity, but as a response to a broader loss of national, in the sense of British, identity.[5]

Illuminating as it is, this analysis only partly explains why the sense of British national identity has weakened so much. For it does not take account of the fact that the

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[3]Christie Davies, "Minority Language and Social Diversion", in Gerald Frost, ed., *Loyalty Misplaced: Misdirected Virtue and Social Disintegration* (London: The Social Affairs Unit, 1997).

[4]Daniel Hannan, "United Ireland Now", *The Salisbury Review* (Summer 1998).

[5]Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 6-7. It is unclear whether the author actually intended *double entendre* in her choice of title.

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inhabitants of the United Kingdom today also feel less British because they have been systematically persuaded that all of the more recognizable features of Britishness—language, history, tradition, ethnic homogeneity—are suspect. This is a long process with parallels in other modern nation-states. But recently it has taken a new twist with the election of Tony Blair's New Labour government, which has managed to provide a fresh challenge to the concept of British nationhood by making it seem at once rebarbative and ridiculous.

Mr. Blair and his colleagues have declared war on British history. The prime minister confessed early on to feeling that "British pageantry is great, but it does not define what Britain is today." The process of "re-branding" Britain then proceeded apace. Initially, four gray plastic "space-age pods", created by a well-known exhibitor of erotic designs, were installed on Horse Guard's Parade—the traditional site for Trooping the Colour, one of the more effective bits of British pageantry—and were used to display "cool" British products. Then a video was circulated among Commonwealth leaders improbably depicting "Britain: The Young Country."

But most effort to design a new politically correct Britain has gone into the £800 million Millennium Dome at Greenwich. The creative director of the project has made it clear that he sees no place in the Dome for the Union Jack (the British national flag), or for "other nationalistic" features that would "give the wrong signals." Apparently without intended irony, and in the absence of a conventional Britannia with her lion and trident, it has been decided that a sixty-foot high metal statue of a woman with a tiny head, long legs, and muscular thighs will straddle the Greenwich meridian line next to the Thames. This intimidating Amazon has been described by government spokesmen as intended to represent the "New Britannia", or alternatively to be "a universal figure which draws on the history of all people."

A Kind of Nationalism

BOTH THE complex historical and the crass contemporary reasons for a decline in the sense of being British affect the English, as well as the Scots, Welsh, and Irish, but necessarily in somewhat different ways. This is because for most of our history as a politically united island no clear distinction was drawn between Englishness and Britishness.

In this matter, assumptions tell their own story. When Admiral Nelson signaled before the Battle of Trafalgar that "England expects every man will do his duty" he was not thereby excusing the fleet's Scottish, Welsh, and Irish sailors from doing theirs. When John Buchan wrote that "[British] Imperialism is . . . a sense of the destiny of England", he was not thus implicitly excluding his fellow Scots from the Imperial enterprise. In the era of British greatness it was indeed quite difficult for foreigners to work out just who among the powerful people they encountered was *not* English—like that confused eighteenth-century Italian hotelier who remarked, "We have ten *inglese* in tonight, four of them French, five German, and a Russian."

The identification of the British with the English was in fact quite understandable. After all, the language spoken in the British Isles, outside of a part of the (ethnically misnamed) Celtic fringe, was quite definitely and properly described as English.[6] And language then as now was one of the principal accepted determinants of nationhood. Norman French, Gascons, Welshmen, Scots, Dutch, and Germans—all have over the centuries sat on the English/British throne. But from the early fifteenth century on—when Henry V was the first English king to write letters in English—

[6]In March this year a group of archeologists showed that no "Celtic" civilization—in the proper European-wide ethnic sense of that term—ever existed, only separate communities of ancient Britons. The archeologists were promptly accused of English nationalism.

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the conduct of important affairs in Britain has mainly been in the English language.

English economic, political, and cultural dominance of Britain is the central fact of British history. Both opponents and defenders of the Union often feel unhappy about accepting that—the former because it puts into sober historical perspective the grandiose claims for Scottish, Welsh, and Irish separateness, the latter because it provides an all too brutal reminder of what the Union of the United Kingdom in fact signifies.

It is rare for nations to challenge political structures that they already dominate. But there are exceptions. It was the Russians, to whom all other inmates of the "Prisonhouse of Nations" had to defer, who finally overthrew the Soviet Union, and it was dominant but paranoid Serbs who rendered Yugoslavia unviable. The English may, in very different circumstances but with equal lack of reflection, be starting to drift along the same route.

A kind of English nationalism is now astir in Britain. Those two overused words, "kind of", are however required, for English nationalism is as yet underdeveloped. It puts in a regular appearance at middle-class English dinner tables, invoked by grumbles about the Scots. It is speculated about by Tory politicians anxious for a cause, and worried about by Labour strategists. It is the regular stuff of journalists' gossip. Indeed, *The Spectator* has opened its columns to continuing debate on the issue. (Hence the frequent references here to contributions to that journal.)

Under the Cross of St. George

BUT THE CHANGE IS perhaps clearest at the bottom of the social pile—and it is difficult to get much lower in any heap of humanity than the English football hooligan. Though there is a precedent. As in the public games of old Byzantium, where the rival teams of "greens" and "blues" also formed the core of a primitive party system, so in Mr. Blair's Britain, where any debate on national identities is frowned upon as atavistic, it is reasonable to look to sport to understand what the English feel about their politi-

Unravelling

As a source of symbolic capital, Britain's credit seems to be exhausted. Fifty years ago this country was still a great power—one of the Big Three. It was a beacon of hope to occupied Europe, standing up to the Nazis where others had capitulated or collaborated. The BBC, starched accents and all, was 'the voice of Britain.' Westminster was thought of as an example to the world, 'the mother of parliaments', enshrining the 'rule of law'; the House of Commons, 'in some ways the most typically English of our institutions', was the cradle in which the idea of democracy had been nursed. Whitehall, home of the great offices of state and nerve-centre of the Civil Service, was run by the best brains in the country, 'Rolls-Royce minds', whose industry was legendary. . . . London, 'the capital of England, and of the British Empire', was 'the greatest city in the world.' . . .

If the United Kingdom continues to unravel, the word 'Britain' may become as obsolete as 'Soviet' is in post-1989 Russia. . . .

No less striking than the collapse of British power, and this country's relegation to a second- or even third-class industrial nation, is the unravelling of any unitary idea of national character. 'Nations change profoundly in the very respects in which their characters might be thought most indelible', wrote Lecky, in his magisterial history of Ireland in the eighteenth century. He was taking issue with the fashionable opposition between the Teuton and the Celt, but his argument has a more general purchase.

—Raphael Samuel, *Island Stories* (Verso, 1998)

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cal identity. When in 1966 the English national football team played in the final of the World Cup, London's Wembley stadium was a waving forest of Union Jacks, symbols of the United Kingdom of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. But in the summer of 1998 it was all quite different. The Union Jacks were now replaced by the red-on-white Cross of St. George, the national flag of England. Streaming from giant banners, painted on the faces of lager-louts in a hundred English urban centers, finally worn by chanting mobs in the back streets of Marseilles, the Cross of St. George was omnipresent. In such circumstances the genie of a kind of English nationalism finally burst from its bottle, which was then smashed in some unfortunate Frenchman's face.

Hardly less significant was the reaction to the misbehavior of the English fans. There were, of course, condemnations and apologies by British ministers. But the immediate response of the fans themselves, and indeed of the media commentators until their more politically correct editors got to them, was quite different. As one sympathetic television report had a whining hooligan explain: "Since the afternoon, the Tunisians were provoking us, insulting us and making obscene gestures. Some young English fell into the trap and couldn't contain themselves."

It is, of course, tempting to consider the behavior of the "young English" as an unfortunate but essentially insignificant reflection of the wider problem of the underclass. But this would be mistaken. There may be many reasons why the "young English" riot, not least among them being that working-class English youths have always traditionally had a proclivity for violence: when harnessed, it has in the past been turned to formidable use in the armed forces. But there is a special reason why the "young English" gathered for mayhem under the Cross of St. George in such numbers this summer. They had lost—or more accurately had been deprived of—a sufficiently compelling British national identity, and they wanted to flaunt, in the way they best knew how, a new identity that they had made their own. In this, the English condition has something in common with the next most frequent offenders among World Cup fans, the Germans, whom English hooligans now apparently regard as their most worthy opponents. The Germans are expected to channel their national self-interest through the European Union, and the English through the Union of the United Kingdom. And in neither case is it now enough.

Nor did the new flag disappear with the dismal termination of England's participation, or even with the World Cup competition. For a full two months the Cross of St. George flew from London taxis, was draped outside pubs, and became the all-purpose motif for tee-shirts. Indeed, only the implacable depression of a chilly, drizzly English autumn proved sufficient to break the spell of English fervor: by October the red-white bunting had at last been taken in. But by now the middle classes and the chattering classes had woken up to the phenomenon.

Indeed a handful of intellectuals had already done so, betraying the tell-tale signs of disillusionment with the traditional concept of Britain and hankering after a more congenial English identity. The novelist Peter Vansittart, author of *In Memory of England* (1998), is not himself apparently interested in politics; he is concerned with investigating the historic character of the English. For all that, his reflections are a sign of the current national mood of self-analysis. By contrast, Edwin Jones does have an implicit program in *The English Nation: The Great Myth* (1998). His purpose is to expose the myths, as he sees them, that have led the English to think of themselves as un-European, and his goal is to restore the nation's true organic identity.

The BBC's most irritating interviewer and sometime social commentator, Jeremy Paxman, is the most recent contributor to the debate on Englishness. In his book, *The English: A Portrait of a People* (1998), Paxman debunks most of what the British (or indeed English) once thought made them distinctive.

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But he argues that "the most vital sense of national identity is the individual awareness of the country of the mind", and concludes optimistically that,

> The new [English] nationalism is less likely to be based on flags and anthems. It [will be] modest, individualistic, ironic, solipsistic, concerned as much with cities and regions as with counties and countries . . . based on values that are so deeply embedded in the culture as to be almost unconscious.

Such ambiguities find no favor with the distinguished polemicist of cultural conservatism, Peregrine Worsthorne, who takes an apocalyptic view of what the national future holds. He predicts:

> The break-up of the United Kingdom will give the best and the brightest of the English the decisive push which will take them off the fence in favour of the European Union, not because they love England so little but because they love England so much. For a nationalistic Little England will be a travesty of Britain's former self, with all its vices bloated and all its virtues shrunken.[7]

Worsthorne's laments at the vulgar, brutish nature of English nationalism reflect the fact that serious political movements require leaders, not just a stock of raw passion. Where might such leadership be found?

No Gratitude for Labour

NOT, OF COURSE, in the Labour Party, which is ever more painfully impaled on its Scottish policy. Labour has, after all, long depended upon its strength in Scotland in order to be a viable British party of government. Some of the government's most senior—and, not coincidentally in English eyes, least popular—members are Scotsmen, including Gordon Brown, the chancellor of the exchequer; Robin Cook, the foreign secretary; and Lord Irvine, the lord chancellor. Labour initially imagined that its promise of a Scottish parliament would win it the lasting gratitude of the Scots. But it has not done so. A number of opinion polls have shown the Scottish National Party (SNP) in the lead and even suggested majority support for its radical program of Scottish "Independence in Europe."

Scottish voters have turned against Labour since the general election for a variety of reasons, the desire to punish Scottish Labour Party corruption and misbehavior being among them. But essentially they have done so because they have turned against the English—and "English" is what Labour in power in Westminster now seems.

It is difficult to overstate the shift in Scottish attitudes, which have rapidly developed from resentment into something approaching hatred for everything and almost everyone from England. An opinion poll published by the *Sunday Times* in June showed that

> 4 in 10 [Scots interviewed] believe anti-English sentiment is increasing north of the border, [that] most regard themselves as Scottish rather than British, [that they] believe independence is an inevitability and feel they will be better off economically in an independent Scotland—at which point a third believe they should break their links with the Queen.

Among Scottish schoolchildren 45 percent felt a little—and 30 percent a lot of—antipathy toward the English, whom they considered "arrogant, ill-mannered, aggressive and untrustworthy."[8] The Scottish editor-in-chief of *The European* and *The Scotsman*, Andrew Neil, has also recorded—and condemned—the phenomenon: "Children with English accents are bullied in the play-ground (one teen-ager was recently murdered for the 'crime' of being English). . . . The English have every right to be mystified by this out-

[7] "England Don't Arise!", *The Spectator*, September 19, 1998.

[8] "Anti-English Feeling Grows in Scotland", *Sunday Times*, June 28, 1998.

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pouring of denigration and hatred."[9]

Mr. Blair too may be forgiven for being mystified. His problem is that, though he was born and went to school in Scotland, the Scots have detected in him a leader as English as their traditional *bête noire*, Margaret Thatcher. The prime minister's attempts to lead the Labour Party's fight-back against the SNP have exposed him to a deluge of bile from the Scottish press. His claim that he would draw support from a "Middle [i.e., middle-class] Scotland", as he had from "Middle England", was subject to particularly waspish criticism, for even the Scottish middle classes now think that they have nothing in common with their English equivalents. That poses New Labour an insurmountable problem: it can neither satisfy the obstreperous Scots, nor reassure the English who resent their manners.

The Liberal Party, relatively strong in Scotland and priding itself on its commitment to devolved government, is equally incapable of articulating English national sentiments. Which leaves the Conservatives. Shell-shocked by the worst defeat in their history, enmeshed in complicated structural party reform, led by an unpopular and still insecure leader, the Conservative Party was initially reluctant to embark on any such controversial strategy as trying to exploit English national exasperation. But Tory toes are now being tentatively dipped into these troubled waters.

The occasion is the need to resolve an abstruse but fundamental constitutional issue long associated with Scottish devolution. This, the so-called "Midlothian Question" (so named after the constituency of the Scottish Labour MP who first expounded it), relates to the fact that after the institution of a Scottish parliament to handle most of Scotland's domestic policies, Scottish Westminster MPs will be in the absurd position of voting on *English* education, local government, and housing, but not on Scotland's. To add insult to injury, English MPs may then be outvoted on matters that concern England because of *Scottish* votes.

One response to this would be for English MPs to meet and vote separately on English matters. But some leading Conservatives want to go further and have begun to argue the case for a new institution, an "English parliament." The new Tory leader, William Hague, is attracted by the politics of this option and in his speech to the Conservative Party Conference in October signaled the fact. Hague emphasized that the Conservatives would not "become an English Nationalist Party." But he went on to say:

> We are going to see that the voters of England are fairly represented. . . . For the first time we will have to become the advocates of major constitutional change. It may be a change in the voting rights of Scottish MPs, it may be an English Parliament in some form.

Of course, the Conservative Party would not be true to its current reputation if it were not split on the issue. Those most fearful of European federalism believe that a separatist England would be more vulnerable to the European project of turning the country into a glorified Euro-region. For their part, some expatriate Scottish Tories now representing English seats at Westminster fear that such talk might amount to giving up on the Union altogether. The two most influential right-of-center English newspapers are also fiercely opposed to the whole project, as they showed in their October 9 reaction to the Tory leader's speech. *The Times* commented, "[Mr. Hague] should have scotched [sic] more firmly any question of a Tory flirtation with English nationalism. . . . An English parliament is not compatible with the stability of the United Kingdom." The *Daily Telegraph* sourly condemned the notion of an English parliament as an "anti-Union concept."

Riding the Tiger

OF COURSE, the great difference between Conservative politicians and Conservative newspaper editors is that

[9]"Scotland Deluded", *The Spectator*, August 15, 1998.

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only the former have to get elected. If there are votes in English nationalism, the Tories will surely find a way to reconcile it with their traditional constitutionalism. It is naive to expect otherwise. But for the country as a whole there are also drawbacks.

The first is obvious: the more explicitly English grievances are stated and English interests declared paramount, the more opportunity the Scottish nationalists will have to fuel separatist passions, bringing the break-up of the UK nearer. That would not always have been so. There was a time—ideally in the 1970s—when some straight talking by English politicians might have done wonders in providing a cold *douche* for tartan zealots. The case could have been put in the starkest terms: "Either accept your [Scottish] responsibilities within a unitary British state, along with all the benefits, or face up to the cost of outright independence. No middle way exists."

Even in the 1980s the stratagem might have been attempted with some hope of success. The Conservative government had, after all, a clear rationale for opposition to devolved government. Margaret Thatcher held that true devolution consists everywhere—not just in Scotland—of returning power to individuals, not creating new political and bureaucratic structures. It might thus have been possible to put the case both for unitarism and for capitalism in clear terms north of the border. But, by and large, it was not done. In Scotland Conservative ministers took public pride in their ability to keep government spending high and state intervention intrusive. What chance, then, of persuading Scots today that low spending and low taxes work? In John Major's time, Scottish ministers desperately toyed with Scottish symbolism (returning the Stone of Scone to Scotland) and further institutional devolution. But it was already too late. The illusions had become too deep-rooted, the subsidies too habitual, the blaming of England for everything too automatic.

Consequently, it is only reasonable to assume that an appeal to English nationalism now would probably bring Scottish independence somewhat closer. And such a prospect, it must be repeated, is hazardous for all concerned—including Britain's allies and neighbors.

Scottish nationalists, of course, imagine that they will launch the new state on a sea of black gold. But even if Scotland comes out of the inevitable legal tangle enjoying the lion's share of current British North Sea Oil revenues, there will remain a gaping deficit in its public finances from the loss of the English taxpayer's subsidy. At present Scotland

Indian Giver

Having crushed internal dissent within the Labour party at Westminster, Mr. Blair is desperate to prevent the Labour left building a new power base in Scotland, Wales or the London boroughs.

But that is the trouble with decentralising power: it involves local people making decisions about who they want to run their affairs.

'Blair is a devolutionary schizophrenic', says Liam Fox, constitutional spokesman for the opposition Conservative party. 'He talks about devolving power, but demonstrates his control freak tendencies by trying to retain power at the centre.'

—George Parker, *Financial Times*, November 14-15, 1998

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receives 10.25 percent of UK public expenditure but only provides 8.9 percent of UK tax revenue. The SNP already promises to raise taxes; but on these figures it would have to hike taxation still higher than it envisages if it wants to balance the books. Nationalist socialism north of the border would also lead to further drainage of home grown talent and foreign investment from Scotland. The SNP assumption that the European Union will bail out Scotland with transfer payments is a pipe-dream. Doubtless, many Europeanists would relish seeing the break-up of Britain, which would then be less strongly placed to frustrate their sort of federalism. But with the EU already committed to extend eastward, taking in more industrially primitive and heavily agricultural members, the chances of the Scots enjoying the kind of *largesse* that currently boosts the economies of Ireland, Spain, Portugal, and Greece are negligible.

In fact, clean contrary to what the Nationalists believe, one of the strongest reasons the English governing elite has fought to keep Scotland within Britain is the fear that an independent Scotland may, for all these reasons, suffer an economic collapse that would cause a flood of destabilizing migration across the border. There is a still worse scenario. From the hard-left socialism of the Scottish Labour Party and the extreme nationalism of the SNP there could emerge a People's Republic of Scotland that might prove no end of a nuisance—not just to the English, whom it would continue to blame for its predicament, but to foreign multinationals, banks, and doubtless (like other socialist Third World countries) America. In short, an unstable left-wing regime in Scotland could prove a major international headache.

There would also be special problems for the other non-English who remained behind in English-dominated Britain. The Welsh would certainly lose out, albeit modestly. The limited significance of Welsh nationalism would become more limited still, and Wales' ability to claim special treatment in central government programs would be lessened, as the British state became still more firmly focused on London.

Far more serious, though, would be the implications for Northern Ireland's position within the Union, already fragile and uncertain as the so-called "peace process" slowly results in the fulfillment of Irish Republican demands. For historical reasons the English have never felt as committed as the Scots to the defense of Ulster. So Matthew Parris directly links the fates of Scotland and Northern Ireland:

> I am giving up the increasingly strained attempt to include in my commentary on 'our' political scene the unspoken implication that this includes Scotland. In these twilight days of the Britain we were born to, we English must learn to let go. Scotland is another country. So it is in the sense of 'our' that I say that the Northern Irish are not English, do not feel to us like 'our' people.[10]

With Scotland a separate country, and with pro-Irish Republican American pressure on a weaker British state correspondingly more influential, the Unionists in Northern Ireland look even more likely finally to be abandoned to their fate of incorporation into the South. Paradoxically, this "success" of American and Irish policy will most likely rebound on both; for the Republican and Loyalist terrorists show no sign of disarming, and without the threat posed to their activities by the British armed forces it is an odds-on bet that one or other group will eventually find a reason to renew the conflict. If that results in a new peacekeeping mission, it will most likely be the Americans, certainly not the British, who will head it.

A Dysfunctional Nation?

WHAT OF THE position of the English within truncated Britain? Nations, like men, do not live by bread alone. Because of the historical congruity between

[10]"Ulster Isn't 'Ours'—It's Another Country", *The Spectator*, July 18, 1998.

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Englishness and Britishness, there is a real loss to England if a part of Britain secedes. Retreats easily become routs. The retreat from Empire made perfectly good sense, and was reasonably well managed, but it left scars on the nation's psyche, scars that were wide open when Dean Acheson made his notorious jibe about losing an empire and not finding a role, and which are still not fully healed. Even the recent unavoidable retreat from Hong Kong prompted nostalgic regrets. Collective psychoanalysis may be even more uncertain a science than the individual kind. But a nation does need to retain the will to hold on to what it is and has—and perhaps even suffer the occasional temptation to expand—if it is not to become dysfunctional. Dysfunctional nations are also unreliable allies. It is not just its checkered history that prevents Germany from taking an active part in high-profile international military operations. Germany's *angst*, its tortured mixture of self-loathing and self-assertiveness, is the condition that rules it out, at present at least, from being accepted as an "ordinary" country. English Britain after dismemberment might be saner than Germany, but it too could well experience a nervous breakdown.

There are also risks of more tangible English losses. There has been little serious discussion of the military implications of separation, but they are large. For example, the British submarine-based nuclear deterrent has for many years been very satisfactorily stationed on the Clyde in Scotland. It would quickly have to be relocated in an English port. The business would be costly and disruptive, and it might open up all sorts of opportunities for unpleasantness between the two countries. (The tensions between Russia and Ukraine that arose from the division of USSR military assets do not provide an encouraging precedent.) The SNP has already started publishing the elements of the British military arsenal it imagines it will carry off as booty. Certainly, the famous Scottish regiments would be weakened if not destroyed. Scottish soldiers remaining in the British army would overnight effectively become mercenaries.

Then there is the matter of Britain's permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council. In theory this should not be affected, for in fact and in law it will be clear that English Britain is the successor state of the United Kingdom. But that may be overoptimistic. British Security Council membership is already a source of resentment among a variety of European and non-European powers and might be subject to renewed challenge. Membership, with its right of veto on actions threatening the national interest, is the practical public expression of Britain's world power status. Loss of it would represent a major downgrading of the country's role, not least as the most steadfast ally of the United States—something the Americans themselves might also have cause to regret.

The truncation of Britain would also have implications for the already difficult relationship with Europe. True, some Conservative intellectuals—as Peregrine Worsthorne predicts—might be so aesthetically repelled that they fall back into Euro-federalism. But that hardly seems the likely general reaction. Particularly if Scotland achieved membership of the European Union—which of course Britain would still be in a position to veto, but probably would not—English resentment against the EU would undoubtedly increase, as the English taxpayer was expected to make a substantial net contribution to the EU annual budget, benefiting the Scots.

English interests would thus altogether be best served by staying with the present arrangements that include Scotland within the UK. That would be better too for the Welsh and Ulstermen. Britain's allies, particularly America, would be spared new uncertainties. The Scots alone fail to see the dangers they face.

Amputate to Save the Patient

BUT, ALL THAT SAID, by any realistic assessment the status quo is no longer a long-term option. If the United Kingdom has lost the support not only of the

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Scots but of a substantial section of the English too, it is only sensible to recognize the fact and act upon it. English nationalism then begins to make sense.

And there are some compensations. A better articulated English nationhood might help heal the inevitable psychological scars of separation. It would certainly make easier a clean break with the Scots on terms that give neither side lingering cause for regret. There is still a risk of further last-minute constitutional concessions to appease the unappeasable. Outright British federalism, with sovereignty itself divided between two or even more parliaments, would appeal to the Liberal Party because it is federalist by conviction, and to Labour because it might become federalist by convenience. But such a program would further undermine Westminster, worsen English government, and only encourage the SNP.

The transition period to independence will, above all, be one for clear thinking and hard bargaining. A strong dose of English nationalism could avoid the sort of compromises over rights of citizenship, access to social security, and possession of military hardware that would lead to endless wrangling in the future between two neighbors with a mutual need to cooperate.

In the longer term, there are other potential gains for England's own governance from Scottish separation. The present Scottish left-wing socialist base of the Labour Party would at a stroke be excised from the new body politic. That would be highly beneficial for England. Mr. Blair would have to press ahead faster with his program of making New Labour free-market friendly so as to continue to attract the support of middle-class England, if he was to remain in government. But if he failed in that task, the disappearance of viscerally anti-Tory Scotland from the British political equation would allow the return of a Conservative administration. Either option would open the way for the radical action that all parties accept is needed, but none dares currently carry out: to curb welfare spending and the dependency culture.

Still unanswered questions about the country's international orientation and role could also at last be openly addressed. A fundamental re-assessment of English Britain's relationship with Europe, and even integration within an Atlantic Free Trade Area, would become possibilities, once the mirage of Scottish "Independence in Europe" had disappeared from the horizon. All of which suggests that with sickly states as with stricken individuals, victims both of prolonged misdiagnosis and maltreatment, amputation, though painful and inherently undesirable, may ultimately be part of the remedy—as long as the patient is strong in heart and mind and retains the will to live. □

Department of Unintended Consequences

Tony Blair, the prime minister, yesterday stepped up his attack on the Scottish National party, condemning as 'utter folly' the nationalist proposal to take an independent Scotland out of Nato. The prime minister also criticised the SNP's commitment to rid Scotland of nuclear weapons. . . .

Mr. Blair claimed the SNP would 'pull our armed forces apart', and threaten 'thousands' of Scottish defence-related jobs. 'To replace the Nato collective defence policy with one in which Scotland is isolated and on its own, is not just a wholly irresponsible policy for defending the country, but the financial costs . . . would be enormous', he said.

—Andrew Parker, *Financial Times*, November 14-15, 1998

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Unusually, the French are Happy

William Pfaff

LAST AUGUST the Paris newspaper *Le Monde* published a front-page article, entitled "*Quand la France s'amuse . . .*", announcing that the French were happy: "For the first time in a long time a strange climate reigns in France, an ambiance of *fête*." The author attributed this not only to victory in the Soccer World Cup but to a fall in unemployment and general satisfaction with the national outlook. The French, the article said, were actually enjoying their vacations. This deserved front-page treatment. It was sensational news.

As the article also noted, thirty years ago last spring, in another commentary in the same newspaper, the head of *Le Monde*'s political service, Pierre Viansson-Ponté, had famously warned, "*Quand la France s'ennuie . . .*" ["When France becomes bored . . ."]. Shortly afterwards, in the "events" of springtime 1968, France found a way to deal with its boredom, with consequences that still persist.

At that time, the French were enjoying what they now call *les trentes glorieuses*—thirty years of triumphant postwar growth. In retrospect one might assume that they should then have been happy, but clearly they were not. The political comment of the time described France as "blocked", its political life stale and frustrating under Charles de Gaulle's splendidly unyielding autocracy, the French discontented with the immense changes that had taken place in their society.

The events of 1968 made them happy—those of them who believed that imagination was indeed about to seize power—but disillusionment was rapid and order was restored. However, the president, a wise man who had described old age as a shipwreck, chose a year later to arrange for himself a characteristically dramatic withdrawal from power, on the occasion of his defeat in an unnecessary referendum on an unimportant reform. (The novelist and Gaullist chronicler François Mauriac called it "an unprecedented case of suicide in the midst of happiness.") The general then died the next year, with panache. The French were even more unhappy.

Their unhappiness was reinforced by the oil producers' boycott of 1973, for France *la crise*, which brought *les trentes glorieuses* to a halt. Ever since, the French have considered themselves in permanent crisis. *La crise* has provided an explanation for everything since that has been worth complaining about.

Events thus conspired with a national disposition. In France, pessimism is taken to be the only intellectually serious stance. To express optimism about France's condition and prospects, and certainly to express pride about France's accomplishments, would be to display the vulgar boastfulness one might expect from Americans, lacking the seriousness appropriate to a mature people.

This, of course, has little to do with the real convictions the French hold about their

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nation, its modern performance, and its prospects. The obligatory pessimism is, however, largely responsible for the permanent confusion that exists abroad about the state of affairs in France. Foreign journalists and specialists interrogate French businessmen, economists, and political analysts about how the country goes, and reflexively they are told that things could scarcely be worse, any sign of positive developments an illusion, France mired in archaisms. When businessmen are asked, they say that the whole society is desperately in need of the enterprise, ingenuity, open-mindedness, and economic freedoms of the United States and Britain, the countries that have shown the way to a radiant future (or so it was said until the events of recent months). The foreign interrogators then publish what they have been told, and the French are outraged and complain about a *complot Anglo-Saxon* to denigrate their country.

YET suddenly, last summer, they found to their astonishment that they were happy. They thoroughly enjoyed their annual six-week holidays in Provence or Brittany. France had won not only the World Cup but the northern hemisphere's rugby championship (the Five Nations Cup). The French-led Airbus consortium was selling more airplanes than Boeing, and the Ariane space-launcher had 60 percent of the world's commercial satellite orders. The American economic paradigm no longer seemed all-conquering.

They were happy with their prime minister, Lionel Jospin, who during the summer months reached levels of popularity in the polls never before achieved by a prime minister of the Fifth Republic. They liked his new government of "the plural Left" (composed of Socialists, Communists, Greens, and nationalists of the Left—the so-called Movement of Republicans led by the interior minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement).

The French were happy with their president. The conservative ex-Gaullist Jacques Chirac won nearly as high a popularity score as his Socialist prime minister. Even Mr. Chirac seemed to be happy. Having ousted his own parliamentary majority from power in 1997, with a disastrously overclever election maneuver—a tactically motivated dissolution of parliament—Mr. Chirac has since radiated contentment in the quasi-ceremonial function he has chosen to make of the presidency.

He has correct and even cordial relations with the prime minister, to whom he leaves the difficult decisions, making little trouble over the "reserved" presidential authority in foreign and security matters. He travels widely, pressing flesh, slapping cows on the flank, and admiring prize pigs, seemingly campaigning for the office he already has and didn't know what to do with.

He has distanced himself from the quarrelling survivors of the shipwrecked Right, and cultivates younger politicians of the Right instead, having seen that Mr. Jospin's success is due in no small part to his having dissociated himself from the politicians who ran the country under François Mitterrand. Most of the members of Mr. Jospin's government have never before held cabinet office.

The French public has found that it likes the "cohabitation" of Right with Left. Intellectuals and political scientists are offended by it because it is not logical. There have been many proposals to reduce the presidential term to five years, to coincide with the parliamentary term. But the authors of the Fifth Republic's constitution have been validated by public opinion, which likes the opportunity provided by unbalanced terms to correct its mistakes, and has found the checks and balances of cohabitation very comfortable—all the more so as the outrageous corruption and abuses of power of the Mitterrand presidency, as well as the past favoritism and occult party financing of the Right, continue to be revealed by the examining magistrates and police, no longer held in check by the reciprocal complicities of the powerful and the passivity of the press.

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BONAPARTE SAID that a good general is a lucky general. He also said that "in war, moral considerations account for three quarters, the balance of actual forces only for the other quarter." Both comments may be applied to the prime ministership of Lionel Jospin. Sheer luck made him prime minister. He was marginalized by the Socialist leadership after serving as minister of education early in the Mitterrand era. They recognized in his stiff, teacherly manner, and his Protestant conscience, a fundamental incompatibility with the kind of government they were running. Following the victory of the Right in the 1993 legislative elections, which launched the second cohabitation of the Mitterrand presidency, with Edouard Balladur the prime minister, Mr. Jospin tried to withdraw from the Paris political scene.

He twice asked Mr. Balladur's foreign minister, Alan Juppé (later Balladur's successor as prime minister), to give him an embassy appointment. (Jospin began his career in the diplomatic service, and as is customary in France's high civil service, retained his rank and seniority despite interrupting his foreign office career to enter politics.) He suggested the ambassadorship to Prague. Juppé ignored the request. At loose ends, without a posting, he occupied himself with pulling together the demoralized Socialists. In the absence of anyone else willing to sacrifice himself in the 1995 presidential election, when Jacques Chirac's victory seemed foreordained, Jospin put himself forward.

He did much better than anticipated, beating Chirac in the first round of the vote, losing only in the second round when other candidates had retired. That left him leader of the Socialist party, but a party that seemed set for a long period in opposition. Then in 1997 came the Right's catastrophic miscalculation in dissolving a parliament in which it possessed a 484 to 93 majority, and that had sat only for three of the five years for which it had been elected. President Chirac and Prime Minister Juppé had wanted a new five-year mandate for their government, to guarantee the conservative parties' power right to the end of Mr. Chirac's presidential term.

The dissolution was decided despite the fact that the Juppé government's initial year in office had not been a great success. Jospin took up the challenge, and led the Socialist party to a plurality victory. The Left was back. The Right was left thunderstruck, split, embittered, riddled with mutual reproach and anger—and so it remains today.

The second manifestation of Prime Minister Jospin's luck was the general European economic upturn that began at about the time he took office. France was at the bottom of the economic cycle under the Juppé government, and his orthodox monetarist measures for producing economic recovery—budget cuts, restrictions on social expenditure, privatizations of state enterprises—were imposed in a condescending and technocratic manner that made little concession to the need to win public sympathy and cooperation. This resulted in the public-sector strikes of midwinter 1996-97, when to general surprise the Paris public cheerfully roller-bladed, biked, and carpooled its way to work, demonstrating sympathy for the public transport and other civil service strikers, and even for the nation's truckers, who blocked the highways for better hours and more money.

After Jospin's victory, the country's unemployment rate began to fall, and the economic growth rate slowly to rise. France now is forecast to have the highest growth rate of the major industrial countries in 1999. Investment is up sharply, as is consumer confidence, and inflation is negligible, around 1 percent. The national statistical agency, Insee, expects a net creation of 360,000 jobs this year, with unemployment, adjusted for population increase, falling to 11.6 percent of the active population by year's end, down from 12.5 percent last year.

Insee's October report said that GDP growth fell in the third quarter to 2.5 percent from 3 percent, but it still predicted a final growth figure for 1998 of 3.1 percent, which is the government's own estimate. However,

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this reflects the high figures of the beginning of the year, and the fourth quarter figure is likely to fall to 2.5 percent annualized, which suggests that the government's expectation of 2.7 percent in 1999 may be overly optimistic. The budget for 1999, seen by the *Wall Street Journal* as "pro-business", is based on the 2.7 percent growth forecast, although at the time of the Washington G-7 meeting at the beginning of October the prime minister qualified that by saying that it depended on Europe's "economic actors continuing to bet on growth."

Insee's own projections also do not yet take into account the effect that the September-October collapse of the dollar will have on French exports. (By early October the dollar had fallen 17 percent from its year's high against the franc.) Airbus has already characterized the dollar's fall as "a disaster", although this will speed the redenomination of Airbus contracts in the new European single currency, which comes into use in January. The Belgian airline Sabena has already asked to pay for future aircraft in euros, and other European airlines are expected to follow suit.

The government is counting on growth to create jobs. At the officially forecast rate of 2.7 percent GDP growth in 1999, enough jobs will be created eventually to absorb France's unemployed. At a 2.5 percent rate, unemployment will be stable. Under 2.5 percent, the rate of unemployment will again begin to rise from the existing level—already the highest among the five leading industrial countries.

The consumer confidence figure issued in October was significantly higher than anticipated, indicating that the international crisis had not yet shaken the domestic economy. This is also true elsewhere in the euro-currency group and reflects a belief that the European single currency will reinforce the strength and stability of the European economy (90 percent of whose exports are within Europe), and will continue to defend Europe against the effects of the world crisis. An indication of this is that the crisis has produced no speculation against any of the eleven currencies that will enter into the euro.

Disposable income has also risen, thanks to a reduction in social security taxes provided by the economics minister, Dominique Strauss-Kahn (the first fall in social charges in fifty years). Consumption rose again in September and is up by more than 9 percent over September 1997. Confidence and disposable income imply continuing consumer spending, an expectation reinforced by the fact that the French public has resisted the lure of the stock market. Less than 20 percent of household financial assets are in equities and more than 40 percent in bonds. Yesterday's alleged archaism has proven today's asset.

The 35-hour work week and the youth employment program, both of which figured prominently in the Socialists' election campaign and are dear to the leading figure on the government's Left, Employment and Solidarity Minister Martine Aubry (Jacques Delors' daughter), are generally thought unlikely to have a major effect on employment. Both, however, have had positive consequences critics did not expect.

As the conservative newspaper *Le Figaro* has observed, the law imposing a shortened work week on larger companies by the year 2000 has had the serendipitous effect of "accelerating the movement towards flexibility." It requires company-by-company negotiations on changed hours and as a result requires a general review of long-standing work restrictions. *Le Figaro* concluded, "The heads of enterprises are secretly delighted, the unions officially furious." (Strauss-Kahn, the economics and finance minister—and Jospin's presumed successor if the prime minister runs for president in 2003 and wins—said last summer that "our difference with the [market] liberals is not that we believe in reducing working hours and they believe in reducing the cost of labor. It is that we do not want to deprive ourselves of either of the two.") The Jospin government has already privatized more companies than the conservative Juppé

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government did, even though it is in principle opposed to privatizations.

The 320 company agreements on the 35-hour week that had been recorded by early October produced a 7.5 percent rate of job creation in those companies, higher than the government had demanded. As the 35-hour week already exists in Germany, for all practical purposes, and is on its way in Italy, it produces no particular competitive disadvantage for the French with respect to their principal competitors and markets, all of which are European.

The youth employment program is producing a social if not economic return. By the end of the year it will have supplied 150,000 auxiliary policemen, teachers' aides and school monitors, sports and social assistants in difficult neighborhoods, and people to go shopping for old ladies or help in retirement homes, all with five-year contracts based on the minimum wage (which in substance would otherwise have been paid to them in unemployment benefits).

THERE IS a Jospin "method." It consists of constant consultation and discussion inside the government and much use of outside studies and reports from specialists and university personalities. The utility of the latter is less to evoke new ideas, since the views of the specialists are ordinarily well known, as to implicate as wide as possible a part of the intellectual and political community in the Socialists' decisions, and to make use of their authority to build popular support.

This method has been employed in immigration and nationality policy reform, policy change on social charges on wages and employers, in what in U.S. parlance would be called welfare reform, in legislation on new technologies, including Internet commercial practice and privacy, and a score of other issues. A Council of Economic Analysis has been formed, composed of economists from the Right as well as the Left.

The intent of all this has been to mobilize opinion from the "bottom-up" (the English expression is used) rather than instructing it from the top-down, as was the case in the previous governments. By bringing a wide variety of views into the debate, decisions when finally taken allow all parties to feel that they have had a hearing. This is a new practice in France, accustomed to a Jacobin authoritarianism and the "elected monarchy" of Fifth Republic government, and so far it is a considerable success.

The method is so much of a success that a leading intellectual of the Right, the novelist and commentator Jean d'Ormesson, recently asked in a full-page article in *Le Figaro*, "Must one become a Socialist?" He said that the factions of the Right were in such disarray, and their debate so distorted by personal ambition and score-settling, as to disqualify them as a serious political force. On the other hand, he said, Mr. Jospin's government was of such intellectual quality, and its principal ministers so clearly superior to their rightist predecessors, that people like him who wanted to influence the country's direction had perhaps no alternative to joining the Socialist party, so as to influence it from within.

The crucial reason for the Right's disarray is the threat to it from the extreme-right National Front (NF). The Front is less an electoral danger to the "republican Right" (as the anti-NF parties are called) as a coalition temptation; with the republican Right and Left fairly evenly distributed, the Right, in order to win, is under pressure to form alliances with the NF. This has already happened in the aftermath of several elections to regional councils. The NF wins its usual minority of some 15 percent of the popular vote, which with proportional representation (the system used in regional elections) can empower it to decide the outcome of the vote on regional president. If the parties of the republican Right renounce National Front support, the Socialists win, even though with a minority of the popular vote.

The president's party, the ex-Gaullist RPR (Rally for the Republic), firmly refuses any collaboration with the NF, but several centrist politicians have accepted election to council

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presidencies with its support, arguing that to give the presidency to the Socialist minority is perverse (and undemocratic).

Thus the most important nationwide debate inside the Right is whether "republican" candidates and even parties should accept "objective" collaboration with the NF, which of course is exactly what the National Front leadership wants. This is a factor demoralizing the Right, and it threatens to break down the quarantine of the NF, which until now has been imposed by the republican parties of both Left and Right. It is a considerable victory for the strategy promoted by the man most likely to become the next leader of the National Front, Bruno Mégret.

A GENERATIONAL change is taking place in the National Front. Jean-Marie Le Pen, a paratrooper in the Algerian war who founded the NF, is a blustering racist and reactionary demagogue who relishes scandalizing right-thinking people with crude but often adroit comments on matters politically correct. When the star of France's World Cup victory last summer proved to be a young man of Algerian descent, and the French were congratulating themselves on the multiracialism of a team that included players from France's Caribbean and Pacific territories, Le Pen toasted the hero of the day as "a true son of Algérie Française"—literally true, since the player, born in France, is the son of a "Harki", a member of the Algerian auxiliary force that fought alongside the French army against Algerian independence, and who subsequently found refuge in France.

However, Mr. Le Pen's crudity limits his appeal to the moderate and middle-class conservatives whose votes the party must win and hold if it is to become a lasting national force. He is now in his seventies, and the battle to succeed him pits a figure from the reactionary Catholic traditionalist movement of the late Archbishop Lefebvre (condemned by Rome) against Mégret, a young and educated rightist radical. The ideological competition is between a representative of the old and familiar populist, Pétainist, anti-Semitic, anti-immigrant margin of French opinion, and an educated and intellectual fascism that wishes to use the party for its own ideological ends.

Fascism is a much-abused term. Le Pen is commonly called a fascist because his program is racist, nationalist, and xenophobic, and because he says such things as that the Nazi death camps were a mere "detail" of the Second World War. This does not make him a fascist in a historically useful sense of that term. He is much closer to the late Senator Theodore Bilbo of Mississippi than to Benito Mussolini, or to the pre-war Jacques Doriot, the closest France has had to a native fascist leader.

Bruno Mégret is a graduate of two of the most important of France's institutions of elite scientific education, the École Polytechnique, where he graduated eighteenth in his class, and the eminent engineering school, l'École des Ponts et Chaussées. He then took an M.S. at Berkeley. He is said to owe his interest in rightist notions of order to his experience of the Berkeley of the 1970s. Returning to France, he joined the French office for national planning. He was recruited to a newly formed rightist discussion group, the Club de l'Horloge (named for the clock in the room where it first met in 1974), established by young graduates of the National School of Administration (ENA). It tried to bring high state functionaries, academics, and business executives into discussions on right-wing themes concerning race, north-south relations, and the philosophy and nature of government. It advocated national preference to counter the threat to France's national identity allegedly posed by immigration.

It flourished at a time when the domination of the Left over Paris intellectual life had been broken by the belated publication of Solzhenitsyn's works, and several groups jointly identified as the "Nouvelle Droite" were attempting to re-establish a coherent intellectual Right. Among the themes of this movement were an intellectualized racism, neo-paganism, a commitment to elitism, and an interest in eugenics and ethnology. The

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"warrior" values of the northern "man of the forests" were favorably contrasted with the alleged passivity and submission of Christians and Jews, monotheist "peoples of the desert."

Fascism, in short, was not dead in France, which was difficult for Americans and the British to appreciate. Ideological debate in the United States is never about anything really serious, but Europe remains a dangerous place. Shortly after Norman Podhoretz had put Ronald Reagan into the White House, he and several other prominent American neoconservatives proposed to travel to Paris to share a platform with representatives of the Nouvelle Droite, assuming that all were fellow-travelers on the same road. The late Raymond Aron fortunately heard of this and, horrified, headed the Americans off.

Bruno Mégret is the first product of this movement (otherwise now a faded force) to become a significant political figure. If he succeeds in imposing himself on the National Front, he can give a novel anti-democratic direction to a party that, however unrespectable its views, still functions within the framework of democratic politics and debate.

The NF has until now been an amalgam of traditional themes: Poujadism, xenophobia, nationalism, anti-Semitism, anti-"Europeanism", anti-Americanism, anti-modernism, and nostalgia for Algérie Française. It is a movement of uncoordinated prejudice and provocation that has inherited the function of political and social protest that the Communist Party abandoned when it became part of the first Mitterrand government in 1981.

Mégret believes in "ethnic rootedness" and racial elites, and opposes the "*métissage généralisé des races humaines*." He thinks "cosmopolitanism . . . an illness of the spirit which acts on a nation in the manner that AIDS does on the human body: it destroys the immunities which protect it from undesirable foreign bodies." He would limit the number of immigrant children admitted to French schools and would challenge the naturalizations of foreigners that have taken place since 1974. All this amounts to is a program likely to give pause to the Frenchman who votes National Front because he is angry that North Africans occupy his old neighborhood, allegedly have stolen his and his children's jobs, and whose own children are rowdy or delinquent. He is unlikely to have framed his plight in terms of "cosmopolitanism", or of the struggle of Aryan warriors of the forest against the men of the desert. Present or past Catholics (the Lefebvre movement is very important to the existing NF) are unlikely to sympathize with their party's new leaders' recommendation of a virile paganism. (A national poll in June found that 68 percent of the French oppose discrimination in employment between the French and immigrants with legal residence. Sixty-seven percent oppose discrimination in social housing. The same percentage says that unemployed immigrants have the right to remain in France and receive social benefits. Only a quarter of those asked favor sending unemployed legal immigrants back to their own countries.)

The Nouvelle Droite has always been a marginal intellectual movement, and Mégret's bid for National Front leadership is an attempt to appropriate a populist movement of social and political protest whose existing motivations have little to do with Nouvelle Droite ideas. The mayonnaise is unlikely to take. For that reason, a Mégret takeover of the National Front seems more likely to reduce its influence than increase it.

THE FUTURE OF the National Front is far more likely to be decided by the employment figures of the next few years. There are no more foreigners in France today than there were in 1931 (6.4 percent of the population; and of the 3.6 million "foreigners" currently in France, 740,000 were born in the country). However, North Africans, the main target of National Front hostility, are more easily identified than the Spanish, Italians, Poles, and Jews of earlier immigrations, and are mostly Muslims, while the earlier immigrants were mostly Catholic.

Europe is likely to take the immigration

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issue away from the National Front by internationalizing it. The EU nations other than Britain, the Scandinavians, and Greece now are part of the so-called Shengen space, inside which there is free passage without immigration controls. Immigration control is the responsibility of individual member countries with respect to arrivals from outside the Shengen area. Thus it has become necessary to integrate and regularize immigration policies across all these countries. The former conservative prime minister, Edouard Balladur, has suggested that this makes it possible to re-admit the National Front into an all-party international debate over immigration, thereby limiting its national appeal by internationalizing the argument.

The children of the North Africans invited to France in the 1950s and 1960s to supply labor for the country's growth during *les trentes glorieuses* are educated and employable. The French state school system is still a high-prestige, high-competence system that really educates children. The problem is that there currently are not enough jobs for these children. A culture of unemployment has begun to develop in immigrant suburbs where fathers have been pensioned off, or have lost low-level jobs and exist on state benefits, while their sons and daughters cannot find work.

In mid-October what began as good-natured national student demonstrations demanding more money and teachers for the schools, a more or less seasonal phenomenon, took a sinister turn. Bands of young people from the ghetto suburbs infiltrated the demonstrations not only to smash up shops and cars but to attack the mainstream demonstrators, stealing their leather jackets, paraboots, backpacks, and portable telephones. The student organizers were left in anger and tears, but also in shock at the seeming nihilism of this eruption of violence from the suburban ghettoes.

If France's immigrant unemployed can be put to work during the four years that remain to Lionel Jospin's government, a fundamental national problem will be on its way to solution. If that does not happen, France will join Britain and the United States in possessing not only an unemployed class but increasingly an unemployable one, with all that implies for social peace—in a country that has the habit of turbulence.

LIONEL Jospin told a group of foreigners last summer that "it is a sociological fact that the French are always discontented with how they are governed." This autumn there were Paris transport strikes, protesting vandalism and violence on suburban trains and buses. There were student strikes, calling for more funds for school equipment. Superficially, the French were resuming their customary *grogne*, or complaining. Jospin's honeymoon seemed over. Yet, as the national statistics indicated, the French felt prosperous and confident in the future (especially because of the forthcoming monetary union—a very important factor in European attitudes today).

Most surprising, the French still are happy. Devoted to narcissistic polling, the Sofres organization went forth in late September to determine how the French now feel. Ninety percent say they are very happy or mostly happy. (Only 61 percent think that other Frenchmen and women are happy—evidence of the necessary pessimism.) Why are they happy? They are happy because of their families—75 percent. They are happy because of love—46 percent. Because of their work—37 percent are happy because they like their jobs. What would do most to make them unhappy? Illness (73 percent), unemployment (52 percent), fear for the future of their children (51 percent). Solitude, the lack of communication among people, makes them unhappy (27 percent), as does the condition of the poor in France and in the world (26 percent).

It is an interesting list. It is perhaps a unique one. Which other peoples say they are so happy today? An old German expression said "happy as God in France." Who would have thought it still true? Not, surely, the French themselves. □

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Courting Danger

What's Wrong With the International Criminal Court

John R. Bolton

ADVOCATES OF a permanent international court to try perpetrators of war crimes and other "crimes against humanity" achieved a major success in July 1997, with the adoption of a multilateral agreement called "the Statute of Rome." This treaty will enter into force after ratification by sixty states (which is expected to occur in 1999 or soon thereafter), creating the first new global juridical institution since the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 1945. In the eyes of its supporters, the nascent International Criminal Court (ICC) is simply an overdue addition to the family of international organizations, an evolutionary step up from the Nuremberg tribunal, and the next logical institutional development over the ad hoc war crimes courts in Bosnia and Rwanda.

On the surface, this logic is straightforward. Through the Genocide Convention of 1948, the four Geneva Conventions of 1949,[1] and subsequent agreements, many of the "principles" of Nuremberg have been adopted in international treaties. The Cold War, however, essentially froze any prospect that the United Nations could serve as a useful vehicle for the creation of new institutions to "enforce" these conventions. Until the Security Council created the Bosnia tribunal in 1993, and a copy for Rwanda shortly thereafter, there were no international war crimes courts. Only the sporadic use of national judicial mechanisms existed, and more often than not these legal systems were either unavailable to the victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity, or were deemed inadequate afterthoughts. The ICJ, although popularly known as "the World Court", has jurisdiction only over disputes between states, not the adjudication of individual guilt or innocence for violations of international codes of conduct.[2]

With the fading of the Cold War, and particularly with the inauguration of the Clinton administration, however, the International Law Commission[3] resumed serious discussions about the creation of a perma-

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[1]The four Geneva Conventions cover the proper treatment of wounded and sick members of the armed forces on land and at sea (and those who are shipwrecked), prisoners of war, and the treatment of civilians in times of war in occupied territories.

[2]ICJ Statute, Article 34(1). The ICJ can also give advisory opinions to the United Nations. UN Charter, Article 96.

[3]The International Law Commission is a UN body created by the General Assembly in 1947 composed of thirty-four "independent" experts, sitting in their personal capacities, charged with responsibility for "the progressive development of international law and its codification."

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nent international criminal court, moving in 1994 to a Preparatory Committee established by the General Assembly. This Committee (essentially a committee of the whole General Assembly) made the final preparations for the Rome Conference in the summer of 1998.

The product of the Conference—the Statute of Rome—establishes both substantive principles of international law and creates new institutions and procedures to adjudicate these principles. Substantively, the Statute confers jurisdiction on the ICC over four crimes: genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression.

"Genocide" is defined essentially as in the original Genocide Convention of 1948, and prohibits acts intended to destroy national or ethnic groups (Article 6 of the Rome Statute). "Crimes against humanity" are broadly defined to prohibit "widespread or systematic" attacks against civilians that result in murder, enslavement, torture, rape, persecution, enforced disappearances, apartheid, and other enumerated offenses (Article 7). Prohibited "war crimes" include acts "committed as a part of a plan or policy" such as: violations of the four Geneva Conventions; attacks against civilian populations and objects or humanitarian personnel or installations; using weapons that cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering; outrages upon personal dignity; starvation as a method of warfare; using civilians as human shields; and a variety of other offenses (Article 8). The "crime of aggression", although declared criminal, is not defined, and the ICC's jurisdiction will not actually attach until the states party to the Statute of Rome agree on a definition pursuant to the Statute's amendatory articles.

Organizationally, the Statute creates an International Criminal Court of eighteen justices to be selected by the treaty parties, and elaborates the Court's structures and procedures. Judges on the Court must reflect "the principal legal systems of the world" and an "equitable geographical representation." Unlike the ICJ, the Court's jurisdiction is "automatic", applicable to *individuals* accused of crimes under the Statute, in many cases regardless of whether their governments have ratified it (Article 25). Moreover, the Court's jurisdiction includes not only those who actually commit offenses, but also commanders or persons who ordered their actions; who knew or should have known that crimes were about to be committed; or who failed to exercise proper control over subordinates, including heads of state or government and members of parliaments (Articles 27 and 28). Those convicted are subject to imprisonment and fines, but there is no provision for the death penalty (Article 77).

A particularly important new institution is the Office of the Prosecutor, which "shall act independently as a separate organ of the Court" (Article 42). The Prosecutor, elected on a secret ballot by an absolute majority of the parties, is responsible for conducting investigations and prosecutions before the Court; no member of the Prosecutor's staff may accept instructions from any outside source. The Prosecutor may initiate investigations based on referrals by those states party to the Statute, or on the basis of information which he or she otherwise obtains. Although the Security Council may refer a matter to the ICC, or may order it to cease a pending investigation, there is no requirement that the Council play any role at all in the ICC's work (Article 16).

Described in these terms, one might assume that the ICC is simply a further step in the orderly march toward the international rule of law and the peaceful settlement of international disputes, sought since time immemorial. Why, then, did the Clinton administration—a principal moving force to create a permanent war crimes court in the five years before the Rome Conference—find itself, to its dismay, unable even to sign the Statute, let alone propose its ratification by the Senate? Why was the United States so isolated from its European allies? What are the prospects for an ICC to which the United States does not belong?

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But Whom Will the Hammer Strike?

WHAT HAPPENED in Rome is the completely unintended consequence of the administration's own basic policies, starting in its first days in office. Security Council Resolution 808, creating an international criminal tribunal for Yugoslavia, was adopted on February 22, 1993, just a month after the inauguration. The Rwanda tribunal followed in Security Council Resolution 935 in July 1994. The administration declared these tribunals justifiable on their own merits, and also saw them as building blocks for the ICC. Over two years ago, David J. Scheffer, a confidante of Secretary of State Albright and chief American negotiator on the ICC, wrote:

> The ultimate weapon of international judicial intervention would be a permanent international criminal court (ICC). . . . The ad hoc war crimes tribunals and the proposal for a permanent international criminal court are significant steps toward creating the capacity for international judicial intervention. In the civilized world's box of foreign policy tools, this will be a shiny new hammer to swing in the years ahead.[4]

But this new hammer—the Court and the Prosecutor—has serious problems of legitimacy. The ICC's principal difficulty is that its components do not fit into a coherent "constitutional" structure that clearly delineates how laws are made, adjudicated, and enforced, subject to popular accountability and structured to protect liberty. Instead, the Court and the Prosecutor are simply "out there" in the international system, ready to start functioning when the Statute of Rome comes into effect. This approach is inconsistent with American standards of constitutional order, and is, in fact, a stealth approach to eroding constitutionalism.

This difficulty stems from the authority purportedly vested in the ICC to create authority outside of (and superior to) the U.S. Constitution, and to inhibit the full constitutional autonomy of all three branches of the U.S. government—and, indeed, of all states party to the Statute. ICC advocates rarely assert publicly that this result is central to their stated goals, but it must be for the Court and Prosecutor to be completely effective. And it is for this reason that, whether strong or weak in its actual operations, the ICC has unacceptable consequences for the United States.

The Court's legitimacy problems are two-fold, substantive and structural. As to the former, the ICC's authority is vague and excessively elastic. This is, most emphatically, *not* a court of limited jurisdiction. Even the meaning of genocide, the oldest codified among the three crimes specified in the Statute of Rome, is not clear. The ICC's creation shows graphically all of the inadequacies of how "international law" is created.

The U.S. Senate, for example, could not accept the Statute's definition of genocide unless it is prepared to reverse the position it took in February 1986 in approving the Genocide Convention, when it attached two reservations, five understandings, and one declaration. One understanding, intended to protect American servicemen and women, provides that ". . . acts in the course of armed conflicts committed without the specific intent [required by the Convention] are not sufficient to constitute genocide as defined by this Convention." Another provides that:

> . . . with regard to the reference to an international penal tribunal in article VI of the Convention, the United States declares that it reserves the right to effect its participation in any such tribunal only by a treaty entered into specifically for that purpose with the advice and consent of the Senate.[5]

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[4]David J. Scheffer, "International Judicial Intervention", *Foreign Policy* (Spring 1996), pp. 48, 51.

[5]See American Society of International Law, *International Legal Materials*, vol. 28, no. 3 (May 1989), p. 782.

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By contrast, Article 120 of the Statute of Rome provides explicitly that "No reservations may be made to this Statute." Thus confronted with a definition of "genocide" that ignores existing American reservations to the underlying Genocide Convention, the Senate could not attach these reservations (or others) to its ratification of the Statute. Stripped of the reservation power, the United States would risk expansive and mischievous definitional interpretations by a politically motivated Court. Indeed, the "no reservations" clause appears obviously directed against the U.S. Senate, and it is a treaty provision we should *never* agree to.

Much of the media attention to the American negotiating position on the ICC concentrated on the Pentagon's fears for American peacekeepers stationed around the world. As real as those risks may be, however, the main concern is not that the Prosecutor will indict the isolated U.S. soldiers who may violate our own laws and values, and their own military training and doctrine, by allegedly committing a war crime. The main concern should be for the president, the cabinet officers who comprise the National Security Council, and other senior civilian and military leaders responsible for our defense and foreign policy. *They* are the potential targets of the politically unaccountable Prosecutor created in Rome.

The Statute of Rome's other two offenses (war crimes and crimes against humanity) are even more vaguely defined, to the point that an activist Court and Prosecutor can broaden the Statute's language essentially without limit. For example, the ICC Statute's definition of "war crimes" includes:

> intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities; [and]
>
> intentionally launching an attack in the knowledge that such attack will cause incidental loss of life or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects or widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment which would be clearly excessive in relation to the concrete and direct overall military advantage anticipated. . . .[6]

A fair reading of these provisions leaves one unable to answer with confidence whether the United States was guilty of war crimes for its aerial bombing campaigns over Germany and Japan in World War II. Indeed, if anything, a straightforward reading of the language probably indicates that the Court would find the United States guilty. *A fortiori*, these provisions seem to imply that the United States would have been guilty of a war crime for dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.[7]

It is precisely this kind of risk that has led the U.S. Supreme Court to invalidate criminal statutes that fail to define exactly what they prohibit under the "void for vagueness" doctrine. "Void for vagueness" is a peculiarly American invention, which is unfortunate because the ICC's list of ambiguities goes on and on. Perhaps the most intriguing is the prohibition in subparagraph (p) against "committing outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment." Were the problems with the Statute of Rome not so gravely serious, one could imagine this provision as the subject of endless efforts at humor. The definition of "crimes against humanity" includes the catch-all phrase "other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health." How will this phrase be interpreted? Who will advise our president that he is unambiguously safe from the retroactive imposition of criminal liability if

[6]Statute of Rome, Article 8.2(b)(i) and (iv).

[7]Some governments and NGOs proposed in Rome that the use of nuclear weapons be specifically prohibited. While these proposals were not accepted, the Statute's actual language can certainly support arguments about the "criminal" effects of nuclear weapons for those seeking to outlaw them.

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he guesses wrong on "inhumane acts"? Is even a defensive use of nuclear weapons an "inhumane act"?

We are nowhere near the end of the list of prospective "crimes" that can be added to the Statute. Many were suggested at Rome and commanded wide support from participating nations. Most popular was the crime of "aggression", which, as noted, was included in the Statute but not defined. Although frequently easy to identify, "aggression" can at times be something in the eye of the beholder. Thus, Israel justifiably feared in Rome that its pre-emptive strike in the Six-Day War almost certainly would have provoked a proceeding against top Israeli officials had the Statute been in effect in June 1967. Moreover, there is no doubt that Israel will be the target of complaint concerning conditions and practices by the Israeli military in the West Bank and Gaza. The United States, with continuous bipartisan support for many years, has attempted to minimize the disruptive role that the United Nations has all too often played in the Middle East peace process. As if that were not difficult enough, we now face the prospect of the Prosecutor and the Court interjecting themselves into extremely delicate matters at inappropriate times. Israel, therefore, was one of the few governments that voted with the United States against the Statute.[8]

Coincidentally, the United States has had its own considerable experience in the past two decades with the concept of "independent counsels." It is an experience that strongly argues against repetition in an international treaty. Simply launching massive criminal investigations can have an enormous political impact. Although subsequent indictments and convictions are unquestionably more serious still, a zealous independent prosecutor can have a dramatic impact just by calling witnesses and gathering documents, without ever bringing formal charges.

The fundamental problem, however, with the latitude of the Court's interpretative authority stems from the decentralized and unaccountable way in which "international law", and particularly customary international law, evolves. Thus, Japan's Permanent UN Representative said approvingly,

> The war crimes which are considered to have become part of customary international law should also be included, while crimes which cannot be considered as having been crystallized into part of customary international law should be outside the scope of the Court.[9]

This statement expresses cogently the notion that customary international law evolves, or "crystallizes." It is another of those international law phenomena that just happens "out there", among academics and NGO activists. While the historical understanding of customary international law was that it evolved from the practices of nation-states over long years of development, today theorists write approvingly of "spontaneous customary international law" that the cognoscenti discover almost overnight. If this is where the ICC moves us, there is serious danger ahead.

But even beyond this risk is the larger agenda of many ICC supporters, invoking the nearly endless articulation of "international law" that continues inexorably to reduce the international discretion and flexibility of nation-states, and the United States in particular. In judging the Statute of Rome, we should

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[8]Israel also objected to a provision (Article 8.2.(b)(viii)) that makes it a war crime to effect "the transfer, directly or indirectly, by the Occupying Power of parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, or the deportation or transfer of all parts of the population of the occupied territory within or outside this territory." The inclusion of Article 8.2.(b)(viii) is an excellent example of the politicization of what is masquerading as a purely legal process. We can expect no end to this kind of effort to gain political advantage by manipulating the Statute, the Court, and the Prosecutor.

[9]Statement of Ambassador Hisashi Owada, head of the delegation of Japan, June 15, 1998.

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not be misled by examining simply the substantive crimes contained in the final document. We have been put on very clear notice that this list is illustrative only, and just a start.

As troubling as the ICC's substantive and jurisdictional problems are, the problems raised by the Statute's main structures—the Court and the Prosecutor—are still worse. We are not considering a relatively passive court such as the ICJ, which can adjudicate only with the consent of the parties, or when the Security Council or the General Assembly asks for an advisory opinion. The Prosecutor is a powerful element of executive power, namely, the power of law enforcement. Never before has the United States been asked to place any of that power outside of the complete control of our national government.

Indeed, the supposed "independence" of the Prosecutor and the Court from "political" pressures (such as the Security Council) should be more a source of concern for the United States than an element of protection. "Independent" bodies in the UN system have often demonstrated themselves to be more highly politicized than some of the explicitly political organs, UNESCO and the ILO being cases in point. Political accountability, by contrast, which is almost totally absent from the ICC scheme, would have been a real protection. Instead, we now face the prospect, as "public choice" analysis would predict, that the ICC will be "captured" not by governments but by NGOs and others with narrow special interests, and the time to pursue them.

THE AMERICAN concept of the separation of powers reflects the settled belief that liberty is best protected when, to the maximum extent possible, the various authorities legitimately exercised by government are placed in separate branches. So structuring the national government, the Framers believed, would prevent the excessive accumulation of power in a limited number of hands, thus providing the greatest protection for individual liberty. Continental European constitutional structures do not, by and large, reflect a similar set of beliefs. They do not so thoroughly separate judicial from executive powers, just as their parliamentary systems do not so thoroughly separate executive from legislative powers. That, of course, is entirely their prerogative, and substantially explains why they are more comfortable with the ICC's structure, which so closely melds prosecutorial and judicial functions. They may be able to support such an approach, but we should not.

In addition, our Constitution provides that the exercise of executive power is rendered accountable to the citizenry in two ways. First, the law enforcement power is exercised only through an elected president. The president is constitutionally charged (Article II, Section 3) with the responsibility to "take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed", and the constitutional authority of the actual law enforcers stems directly from the only elected executive official. Second, Congress, all of whose members are popularly elected, exercises significant influence and oversight, both through its statute-making authority and through the appropriations process.

In European parliamentary systems, these sorts of political checks are either greatly attenuated or entirely absent, just as with structures such as the Court and Prosecutor created in Rome. They are accountable to no one. The Prosecutor will answer to no superior executive power, elected or unelected. Nor is there any legislature anywhere in sight, elected or unelected, in the Statute of Rome. The Prosecutor, and his or her as yet undefined investigatory, arresting, and detaining apparatus, is answerable only to the Court, and then only partially. The Europeans may be comfortable with such a system, but that is one reason why they are Europeans and we are not.

By long-standing American principles, the ICC's structure utterly fails to provide sufficient accountability to warrant vesting the Prosecutor with the Statute's enormous power of law enforcement. Political accountability is utterly different from "politiciza-

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tion", which all agree should form no part of the decisions of either the Prosecutor or the Court. Today, however, the ICC has almost no political accountability *and* carries an enormous risk of politicization. This condition has little to do with our fears of isolated prosecutions of individual American military personnel around the world. It has everything to do with the American fear of unchecked, unaccountable power, and explains why America properly stood apart in Rome from Europe and Canada.

The Real International Interests at Stake

BEYOND the particular American interests adversely affected by the ICC, we can and should worry about the more general errors of the ICC's supporters that will affect all nations. Thus, although the gravest danger from the American perspective is that the ICC will be overbearing and unaccountable, there is an at least equally likely possibility that, in the world at large, the new institution will be powerless and ineffectual. While this may sound contradictory, the ICC is ironically one of those rare creations that may be simultaneously dangerous and weak because its intellectual underpinnings are so erroneous or inadequate in so many respects.

The most basic error is the belief that the ICC will have a substantial, indeed decisive, deterrent effect against the possible perpetration of heinous crimes against humanity. Ironically, ICC proponents now *criticize* Nuremberg as an inadequate, ex post facto response to such crimes, and argue instead for the deterrent value of a permanent Court and Prosecutor.

Rarely if ever has so sweeping a legal proposal had so little empirical evidence to support it. The evidence demonstrates instead that the Court and the Prosecutor will not achieve their central goal because they do not, cannot, and should not have sufficient authority in the real world.

Behind the optimistic rhetoric, ICC proponents have not a shred of evidence supporting their deterrence theories. In fact, they fundamentally confuse the appropriate roles of political and economic power, diplomatic efforts, military force, and legal procedures. No one seriously disputes that the barbarous actions about which ICC supporters complain are unacceptable, but those supporters make a fundamental error in trying to transform matters of power and force into matters of law. Misunderstanding the appropriate roles of force, diplomacy, and power in the world is not just bad analysis, but bad and potentially dangerous policy.

Recent history is filled with cases where even strong military force or the threat of force failed to deter aggression or gross abuses of human rights. ICC proponents concede as much when they cite cases where the "world community" failed to pay adequate attention, or failed to intervene in a sufficiently timely fashion to prevent genocide or other crimes against humanity. The new Court and Prosecutor, it is said, will now guarantee against similar failures.

But this is fanciful. Deterrence ultimately depends on perceived effectiveness, and the ICC is most unlikely to have that. Even if administratively competent, the ICC's authority is likely to be far too attenuated to make the slightest bit of difference either to the war criminals or to the outside world. In cases where the West in particular has been unwilling to intervene militarily to prevent crimes against humanity as they were happening, why will a potential perpetrator be deterred by the mere possibility of future legal action? A weak and distant Court will have no deterrent effect on the hard men like Pol Pot most likely to commit crimes against humanity. Why should anyone imagine that bewigged judges in the Hague will succeed where cold steel has failed? Holding out the prospect of ICC deterrence to the truly weak and vulnerable is a cruel joke.

Beyond the predictive issue of deterrence, it is by no means clear that "justice" is everywhere and always consistent with the attainable political resolution of serious dis-

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putes, whether between or within states. It may be, or it may not be. Unfortunately for moralists and legal theoreticians, human conflict teaches that policymakers must often make trade-offs among inconsistent objectives. This can be a painful realization, confronting us as it does with the irritating facts of human complexity, contradiction, and imperfection. Some elect to ignore these troubling intrusions of reality, but those who would ponder the ICC's practical merits do not have that option.

The existing international record of adjudication is hardly encouraging. The ICC's framers tacitly recognize this problem because, with virtually no debate in Rome, and with the full endorsement of the Clinton administration, they created the ICC outside of the United Nations system. So visibly separating the ICC from the International Court of Justice tacitly acknowledges that the ICJ has failed to garner the legitimacy sought by its founders in 1945.[10] In some respects, this is more than ironic, because much of what was said then about the ICJ anticipates recent claims by ICC supporters. These touching sentiments were not borne out in practice for the ICJ, which has been largely ineffective when invoked and more often ignored in significant international disputes. Indeed, the United States withdrew from the mandatory jurisdiction of the ICJ after its erroneous Nicaragua decisions, and it has even lower public legitimacy here than the rest of the UN.[11]

Among the several reasons why the ICJ is held in such low repute, and what is admitted privately in international circles, is the highly politicized nature of its decisions. Although ICJ judges supposedly function independently of their governments, their election by the UN General Assembly is highly politicized, involving horse trading among and within the UN's several political groupings. Once elected, the judges typically vote along predictable national lines except in the most innocuous of cases. Thus, the ICJ's failure to generate widespread international respect and legitimacy on "civil" matters may well provide the best explanation of why the new "criminal" court was established outside the UN.

The ICJ's failure is a continuing sore point for ICC supporters, one of whom, Kenneth Roth, recently acknowledged that much will depend "on the character and professionalism of the ICC prosecutor and judges." Roth cites the skill and integrity of several jurists serving on the Bosnia and Rwanda tribunals, and concludes that "there is every reason to believe that the ICC will be run by jurists of comparable statute."[12] Utterly absent from Roth's justification is even a mention of the judges of the ICJ during more than fifty years of existence, though it is surely an institution more comparable to a permanent ICC than are the ad hoc Bosnia and Rwanda courts. Roth's silence speaks for itself.

Although supposedly a protection for the ICC's independence, the provisions for the "automatic jurisdiction" of the Court and the Prosecutor are unacceptably broad. They constitute a clear break from the basic premise of the ICJ that there is no jurisdiction without the consent of the state parties. Because parties to the ICC may refer alleged crimes to the Prosecutor, we can virtually guarantee that some will, from the very outset, seek to use the Court for political purposes.

In fact, the Rome Conference substantially minimized the Security Council's role in ICC affairs. The limited remaining role for the Security Council in the ICC is found in Article 16 of the Statute of Rome. Under that article, the Prosecutor is free to investigate, indict, and try before the Court completely at will, unless and until the Security Council

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[10]Although the ICJ has its own Statute, it is expressly created by Chapter XIV of the UN Charter, and is thus one of the "principal organs" authorized thereunder.

[11]The Nicaragua decisions are discussed at length in Robert Bork's "The Limits of 'International Law'", *The National Interest* (Winter 1988/89).

[12]Kenneth Roth, "The Court the U.S. Doesn't Want", *New York Review of Books*, November 19, 1998, p. 45.

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acts to stop him. In requiring an affirmative vote of the Council to *stop* a case, the Statute shifts the balance of authority from the Council to the ICC. Moreover, a veto by a Permanent Member of such a restraining Council resolution leaves the ICC completely unsupervised. It seriously undercuts the role of the five Permanent Members of the Council, and radically dilutes their veto power. This was precisely the objective of the ICC's proponents.

Since the UN Charter charges the Council with "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security", it is more than passingly strange that the Council and the ICC are now to operate almost independently of one another. Strange, that is, only if one is unfamiliar with the agenda of many governments and nongovernmental organizations supporting the ICC, whose agenda has for years included a downgrading of the Security Council and especially the weakening of the veto power of its five Permanent Members.

THIS ATTEMPTED marginalization of the Security Council is a fundamental *new* problem created by the ICC that will have a tangible and highly detrimental impact on the conduct of U.S. foreign policy. The Council now risks having the ICC interfere in its ongoing work, with all of the attendant confusion between the appropriate roles of law, politics, and power in settling international disputes.

Accumulated experience strongly favors a case-by-case approach, politically and legally, rather than the inevitable resort to adjudication contemplated by the ICC. One contemporary alternative is South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In the aftermath of apartheid, the new government faced the difficult task of establishing and legitimizing truly democratic governmental institutions while dealing simultaneously with earlier crimes. One option would have been widespread prosecutions against those who perpetrated human rights abuses, but the new government chose a different model. Under the Commission's charter, those who committed human rights abuses could come before it to confess past misdeeds. Assuming they confessed truthfully, the Commission could in effect pardon them from prosecution. This approach was intended to make public more of the truth of the apartheid regime in the most credible fashion, to elicit thereby admissions of guilt, and then to permit society to move ahead without the continual opening of old wounds that trials, appeals, and endless recriminations might bring.

I do not argue that the South African approach should be followed everywhere, or even necessarily that it is the correct solution for South Africa. But it is radically different from that contemplated by the ICC, which seeks vindication, punishment, and retribution as its goals, as is the case for most criminal law enforcement institutions. The clear point is that, in some disputes, neither retribution nor complete truth-telling is the best objective. In many former communist countries, for example, citizens are still wrestling with the handling of secret police activities of the now defunct regimes. So extensive was the informing, spying, and compromising in some societies that a tacit decision has been made that the complete opening of secret police and Communist Party files will either not occur, or will happen with exquisite slowness over a very long period. In effect, these societies have chosen "amnesia" because it is simply too difficult for them to sort out relative degrees of past wrongs, and because of their desire to move ahead.

One need not agree with these decisions to have at least some respect for the complexity of the moral and political problems these societies face. Only those completely certain of their own moral standing, and utterly confident in their ability to judge the conduct of others in difficult circumstances, can reject the amnesia alternative out of hand. Our experience should counsel for a prudent approach that does not insist on international adjudication even over a course that the par-

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ties to a dispute might themselves agree upon. Indeed, with a permanent ICC, one can predict that one or more disputants might well invoke its jurisdiction at a selfishly opportune moment, and thus, ironically, make an ultimate settlement of their dispute more complicated or less likely.

The recent experience of Chile's General Pinochet compellingly demonstrates this possibility. Chile made painful choices to restore democracy in 1990 after seventeen years of military rule. Many, in Chile and elsewhere, felt that the general was treated too leniently. This is a legitimate view, but so too is its opposite, which asserts the primacy of returning the military to its barracks. Chileans made their choice and have lived with it. But for a self-selected Spanish official, it was not good enough. He sought to extradite Pinochet (during a visit for medical treatment, and under diplomatic status) from the United Kingdom for a trial in Spain on charges of, among other things, genocide. However this particular affair ends, it demonstrates the moral and political arrogance that will likely permeate the ICC, contributing materially to its potential for damage.

ANOTHER alternative, of course, is for the parties themselves to try their own alleged war criminals. ICC proponents usually ignore or overlook this possibility, either because it is inconvenient to their objectives, or because it utilizes national judicial systems and agreements among (or within) nation-states to implement effectively. One important example involves Cambodia. Although Khmer Rouge genocide is frequently offered as an example of why the ICC is needed, its proponents never explain why the Cambodians should not themselves adjudicate alleged war crimes.

Cambodia is again split by intense political differences. As before, the factions seek to internationalize their dispute, each hoping that external political intervention, including the idea of an international war crimes tribunal, will tip the domestic political scales in its favor. Instead, Cambodians should judge their own criminals. There is a strong argument that to obtain the full cathartic benefit of war crimes trials, a nation must be willing to take on the responsibility of judging its own. To create an international tribunal for the task implies immaturity on the part of Cambodians and paternalism on the part of the international community. Repeated interventions by global powers are no substitute for the Cambodians coming to terms with themselves.

ICC proponents frequently assert that the histories of the Bosnia and Rwanda tribunals established by the Security Council demonstrate why a permanent ICC is necessary. The actual evidence proves precisely the contrary: it is wildly premature to extrapolate from the limited and highly unsatisfactory experience with ad hoc tribunals to a permanent Court and Prosecutor.

For Bosnia, as noted above, the ad hoc court was established before the Dayton Agreement, and serves as an example of how a decision to detach war crimes from the underlying political reality advances neither the political resolution of a crisis nor the goal of punishing war criminals. Even today, after Dayton, the tribunal cannot achieve its declared objectives. ICC proponents complain about the lack of NATO resolve in apprehending alleged war criminals. But if not in Bosnia, where? If the political will to risk the lives of troops to apprehend indicted war criminals there does not exist, where will it suddenly spring to life on behalf of the ICC?

It is by no means clear that even the tribunal's "success" would complement or advance the political goals of a free and independent Bosnia, the expiation of wartime hostilities, or reconciliation among the Bosnian factions. In Bosnia, there are no clear communal winners or losers. Indeed, in many respects the war in Bosnia is no more over than it is in the rest of the former Yugoslavia, such as Kosovo. Thus, there is no agreement, either among the Bosnian factions or among the external intervening powers, about how the war crimes tribunal fits into the overall

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political dispute or its potential resolution. Bosnia shows that insisting on legal process as a higher priority than a basic political resolution can adversely affect both the legal and political sides of the equation.

In short, and very much unlike Nuremberg, much of the Yugoslav war crimes process seems to be about score settling rather than a more disinterested search for justice that will contribute to political reconciliation. If one side—most likely the Serbs—believes strongly that it is being unfairly treated, then the "search for justice" will have harmed Bosnian national reconciliation. This is a case where it only takes one to tango. Outside observers might disagree with this assessment, but outside observers do not live in Bosnia.

And again, the option of Bosnians trying their own war criminals is not even seriously discussed. One reason, of course, is that at the time of Dayton the Hague tribunal was already a fact of life that some parties did not want to modify. More troubling is that Dayton did not really accomplish much more than a de facto partition of Bosnia. Bluntly stated, if Bosnian Serbs, Croats, and Muslims had reached a true meeting of minds at Dayton, they would have resolved the question of war crimes allegations. That they did not is a straightforward admission that Dayton simply papered over, and almost certainly only temporarily, the underlying causes of past and future conflicts.

The experience of the Rwanda war crimes tribunal is even more discouraging. Widespread corruption and mismanagement in that tribunal's affairs have led many simply to hope that it expires quietly before doing more damage. At least as troubling, however, is the clear impression many have that score settling among Hutus and Tutsis—war by other means—is the principal focus of the Rwanda tribunal. Of course it is.

Consider also Iraq. Its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait unquestionably qualifies as an act of aggression, and there is little debate that the Iraqis committed any number of acts against Kuwaitis and others that would be illegal under the Statute of Rome. Yet, by conscious decision, neither the United States nor any other power, including Kuwait, has seriously sought to create a war crimes tribunal for the Persian Gulf War, and the reasons are clear: this is a case to abjure war crimes prosecutions because the appropriate circumstances are not yet present.

In the first place, the victorious Gulf coalition never had as a goal the unconditional surrender of Iraq or Saddam Hussein's removal from power. Moreover, the key defendants from Saddam on down are not in custody, nor is potentially dispositive documentary and physical evidence, which is still in the hands of the Iraqi government and military. Prosecuting the alleged war criminals *in absentia* is therefore the only possibility, and this approach raises enormous potential risks. Specifically, *in absentia* prosecutions could give rise to "Versailles syndrome" feelings of injustice and persecution by the West, both among Iraqis and generally throughout the Arab world. What Iraq really needs is a new government that can decide on justice for Saddam and his henchmen as an element of that country's own internal political maturation.

ICC advocates defend the Statute of Rome by pointing to the doctrine of "complementarity" (deference to national judicial systems) embodied in the Statute. "Complementarity", like so much else connected with the ICC, is simply an assertion, utterly unproven and untested. If complementarity has any real substance, it argues against creating the ICC in the first place. If most national judicial systems are capable of addressing the substantive crimes the Statute proscribes, then that demonstrates why, at most, ad hoc international tribunals are necessary. Indeed, it is precisely the judicial systems that the ICC would likely supplant (such as in Bosnia or, possibly, in Cambodia) where the international effort should be to encourage the warring parties to resolve questions of criminality as part of a comprehensive solution to their disagreements. Removing key elements of the dispute, especially the emotional and contentious issues of war crimes and

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crimes against humanity, undercuts the very progress that these peoples, victims and perpetrators alike, must make if they are ever to live peacefully together.

Next Steps

RATHER THAN walk away from the wreckage of its policy in Rome, the Clinton administration is actively working to recreate its shattered strategy to bring the United States into the ICC. It does so because its commitment to the ICC resides at the core of its foreign policy, and because of the intense criticism from the administration's erstwhile supporters, which may shock those unfamiliar with the Byzantine politics of international human rights. Those scorned demand that Clinton sign the Statute of Rome so that it will "put America back in the camp of the friends, rather than the enemies, of human rights."[13] This is true Puritanism: failure to support the ICC is proof of apostasy on human rights generally.

In response, the administration will likely take several steps. First, it will continue to negotiate with signatories in hope of obtaining sufficient amendments to allow the United States to sign on. Second, it will probably support transferring the work of the Bosnia and Rwanda tribunals to the ICC, thus triggering financial support from the UN (and therefore from its principal funder, the United States). Third, the administration will attempt to have the Security Council refer other matters (such as Cambodia) to the ICC, rather than have them come from state referrals or from the Prosecutor, thus also triggering the UN funding obligation. Fourth, they will seek to provide "temporary" or "transitional" assistance to the ICC, which, in the ways of all bureaucracies, may endure forever.

Given that we face two years before having even a prospect of a president who would resolutely oppose the ICC, we can only assume that the Statute of Rome will enter into force before then. Nonetheless, we should not assume that others, especially those who will pay the bills in our absence, will rush to make it fully functioning. Having done the "right thing" in creating the ICC, many European governments, which have more than a passing acquaintance with cynicism, may not rush to make it fully operational. Nor will they necessarily hasten to risk the catastrophic consequences of attempting to assert jurisdiction over an American citizen, interfere in Security Council matters, or otherwise obstruct U.S. foreign policy.

In fact, whether the ICC survives and flourishes depends in large measure on the United States. We should therefore ignore it in our official posture, and attempt to isolate it through our diplomacy, in order to prevent it from acquiring any further legitimacy or resources. U.S. policy toward the ICC should be, in a phrase familiar to President Clinton, "Three No's": no financial support, directly or indirectly; no collaboration; and no further negotiations with other governments to "improve" it. Such a policy cannot entirely eliminate the risks posed by the ICC, but it can go a long way in that direction. Certainly, members of Congress should press this view on the Clinton administration.

The plain fact is that additional "fixes" over time to the ICC will not alter its multiple inherent defects. The United States has many alternative foreign policy instruments to utilize that are fully consistent with our national interests, leaving the ICC to the obscurity it so richly deserves. Signatories of the Statute of Rome have created an ICC to their liking, and they should live with it. We should not. □

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[13]Roth, p. 47.

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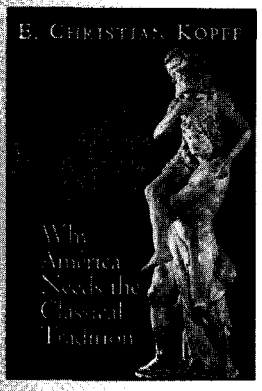

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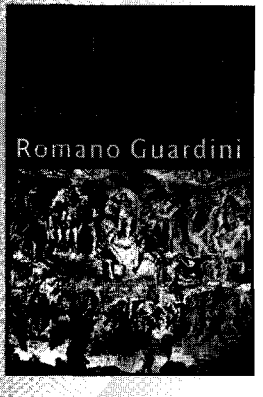

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"Orientalism", *the Evolution of a Concept*

Neil McInnes

IN HIS MUCH visited web site devoted to the Asian financial panic, economist Paul Krugman has said, "Anyone who claims to fully understand the economic disaster that has overtaken Asia proves, by that very certainty, that he does not know what he is talking about." And he adds the warning, "*Nobody* really knows what comes next."

Even if it is too early to be certain about the causes and the course of these momentous events, it is time enough to reconsider some of the things that were being said about the Asian economies when they were still flourishing. More particularly, it is already profitable to reconsider things that were being said, in the light of Asia's booming prosperity before July 1997, about *Western* economies, politics, values, and sciences. It is not just that so many people extrapolated adventurously and predicted that Asia, led by China or Japan, would soon eclipse the economies of America and Europe; people extrapolate wildly all the time. It is that so many drew the conclusions that Asia's prosperity disproved economic science, impugned Western democracy, cast doubt on rational policy-making and even on reason itself, and turned probity into a quaint curio.

These bold conclusions might have been drawn less readily if the ground had not been prepared by the academic doctrine, taught in all our universities for twenty years, that the West has always been wrong about Asia anyway. Its supposed knowledge of Asia, this doctrine maintained, was trumpery called "Orientalism", which was not, as it pretended, a body of objective learning but (in the words of Edward Said) "the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient . . . a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. . . . European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient."

Naturally, if our knowledge of Asia was really only a partisan delusion, a way of demeaning Asians' affairs to the level of a Chu Chin Chow pantomime, then we must fail to understand what was happening in their economies. If Asians were prospering mightily using methods all of their own devising, while Westerners wallowed in smug superiority, then it was inevitable that our students of Asia would find much to criticize at home. Even if they held no brief for Asian values, they were bound to take a swipe at Western values. They laid on with a will, as a few select quotations will illustrate.

Thus James Fallows in *Looking at the Sun: The Rise of the New East Asian Economic and Political System* (1994) drew from the study of Asia the moral, "Western societies should concentrate on whether and how to remake themselves." They should start by remaking economic science:

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> The powers of 'quantitative analysis', as used by modern economists and managers, are enormous but nonetheless limited. . . . The economists of the 1990s cannot honestly fit the rise of Japan, Korea and Taiwan into their models of how economies should grow. . . . Economics gives us clear logical 'models' that are supposed to explain dealings among nations. History gives us different, more complicated lessons, which are more useful for understanding what is going on in Asia now.

What would replace Western economics was "a new paradigm", said John Naisbitt in *Megatrends Asia: The Eight Asian Megatrends that are Reshaping Our World* (1996). It consisted of the network of networks set up by the overseas Chinese, which constituted "the third largest economy in the world." Speaking of the businessmen who were later driven into exile from Indonesia after their homes were burned down, their wives and daughters raped, and their supermarkets looted, Naisbitt said a knowledge of their methods would be more useful than economic theory. Sterling Seagrove emphatically agreed in his *Lords of the Rim: The Invisible Empire of the Overseas Chinese* (1995). It was "the Chinese, their management savvy and their international connections" that explained how the armed forces of Thailand and Indonesia had become "fabulously rich."

Such arrangements, which were baptized "network capitalism", were not peculiarly Chinese. R. Taggart Murphy, in *The Weight of the Yen* (1996), said they were also the basis of the Japanese economy: "What really matters for a Japanese company are the strength and credibility of its network. Its 'capital' consists less of yen than the number and quality of its relationships." Jim Rohwer's *Asia Rising: How History's Biggest Middle Class Will Change the World* (1996) averred that Asia's economies would dominate the world, but it was one of the few books that had reservations about Asia's "failure to move beyond the informal and the personal in its way of doing business." That was a discreet reference to what is nowadays openly deplored as the nepotism and crony capitalism that characterize the "networks."

Having dumped economic science for the study of the networks, many Asian specialists went on to express doubts about Western political systems. Eamonn Fingleton in *Blindside: Why Japan is Still on Track to Overtake the U.S. by 2000* (1995) found the source of America's supposed inferiority in Congress and the U.S. bureaucracy, along with excessive American individualism. "In truth, the United States is, unbeknownst to itself, in the throes of a constitutional crisis", he said. He had only praise for Japanese institutions that are, for their part, now in the throes of prosecutions, forced resignations, and suicides.

Warren Reed and Reg Little had already, in *The Confucian Renaissance* (1989), given the credit for East Asian prosperity to a set of Asian values that included "rule by men, or virtue, rather than by law", "institutional pragmatism and rule by officials", and "rejection of Western individualism as spiritual pollution." They thought these values would eventually prevail worldwide and they backed the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*'s prediction that globalization would in effect mean Confucianization. They returned to the attack, with infelicitous timing, in *The Tyranny of Fortune* (1997), in which they derided Westerners' "misplaced scientific faith." They asked rhetorically,

> Is it possible that the triumph of rationality has been revealed as flawed and limited? Is it possible that rationality will not finally conquer traditional forms of life which Weber thought were doomed? Is it possible that Eastern right-brain, associative, holistic and intuitive ways of thinking are pointing to weaknesses in aggressive Western left-brain, linear, mechanistic and rational thinking? As the rational ideals of liberal democracy and market economics have been taken to extremes, have they left Western societies in danger of fragmentation and disintegration, vulnerable to the more coherent, more tra-

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ditional and, in at least one sense of the word, more humane economies of East Asia?

They were not alone in making the bold leap from Asian economic expansion to a rejection of Western rationality. John Gray's *Enlightenment's Wake* (1995) cited the success of the Asian tigers in achieving economic growth while ignoring Western free-market policy prescriptions as one reason among others for renouncing Enlightenment values. Gray dismissed the scientific worldview as "merely one of the many superstitions of Enlightenment culture." Asia was above such superstition. As John Ralston Saul said in *Voltaire's Bastards: The Dictatorship of Reason in the West* (1992), "The Chinese looked into formal logic well before we became obsessed with it and found it less important than other things."

Said's Impact

THERE WAS, then, a fairly widespread inclination to find in Asian export statistics and GDP growth a justification for deriding economics, democracy, and reason as the baubles of the backward West. Such an inclination might seem merely venal, as placing a higher value on commercial performance than on principle, but it was prepared by an intellectual effort of some vigor and ingenuity. The denunciation of Western arrogance and hedonism in books such as Shintaro Ishihara's *The Voice of Asia* (1995) was probably no more influential in this than the similar rantings of certain Southeast Asian politicians. The argument required academic respectability, and this it acquired from Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and the considerable amount of work that that book has directly inspired. The common project here was to establish that all formal Western knowledge of Asia was vitiated by the unstated assumption that the Westerner is "rational, virtuous, mature, normal", whereas the Oriental is "irrational, aberrant, underdeveloped, inferior." In seeking to undo that contrast, even to reverse it perhaps, the fact of prodigious, independent economic achievement in Asia would be highly relevant. As Hung-chao Tai said in *Confucianism and Economic Development: An Oriental Alternative?* (1989),

> For precisely the reasons noted in Said's *Orientalism* . . . the West has failed to recognize the significance of the difference between the West and Japan. . . . Though Said dealt only with Western studies on the Middle East, his criticism of Western scholarship is considered equally applicable to Western studies on Asia as a whole.

Actually, when Said's book appeared critics said just the opposite. Bernard Lewis, for example, said in a piece reproduced in *Islam and the West* (1993) that Said's attempt to pass off the Middle East (and at that a Middle East without Turkey, Persia, and, of course, Israel) as "the Orient" was grotesque. That was something that Said's numerous acolytes set out to repair. V.Y. Mudimbe in *The Invention of Africa* (1988) and then in *The Idea of Africa* (1994) applied Said's anti-Orientalist arguments "to interrogate Western images of Africa [by] analyzing the power of anthropologists, missionaries and ideologists." The conclusion was that knowledge was everywhere corrupted by power. Imperialism and cultural dominance generated bogus "colonial sciences" and a false conception of Africa, which was then forced upon Africans themselves.

Rana Kabbani in *Europe's Myth of Empire* (1985) found that identical considerations applied to all Western knowledge of the Third World. What Said had discovered in scholarship about the Middle East was true of Western pseudo-knowledge about all Asian peoples. By 1995 James G. Carrier could say in *Occidentalism: Images of the West* that "Said's work is so influential that 'Orientalism' has become a generic term for a particular suspect type of anthropological thought" (meaning thought about other cultures). A major effort went into extending the reach of Said's destructive argument to India, that is, to

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Indology and all Western study of the subcontinent's history, culture, and economy. Ronald Inden's *Imagining India* (1990), Javed Majeed's *Ungoverned Imaginings: James Mill's History of British India and Orientalism* (1992), and Kate Teltscher's *India Inscribed: European and British Writing on India* (1995)—in addition to a copious literature in the journals—all sought to show that the West's purported knowledge of things Indian was polluted by the power the West wielded over Asian societies. Inden said it was not "a question of prejudice or bias, of the like or dislike of the peoples or cultures of Asia, or of a lack either of objectivity or empathy"; rather it was a question of "the relationship of dominance embedded [in] the structure of ideas that constitutes orientalism." That meant that, since all Westerners were, willy nilly, implicated in that dominance, no matter how they might try they could not escape the corruption of their knowledge of Asia by falsehood. Inden proceeded to dismiss as worthless almost everything ever written in the West about Hinduism, the caste system, and the economics of Indian village life.

Majeed agreed with Said that "the Orient was in a very real sense the creation of a whole apparatus of intellectual practices which were a part of . . . the epistemological ventures which were integral to European imperialism." While criticizing Said's "rather monolithic and ahistorical" view of Orientalism, Majeed nevertheless argued that even Hinduism was a European construct. "In some ways the [British] Asiatic Society initiated the integration of the vast collection of myths, beliefs, rituals, and laws into a coherent religion, and shaped an amorphous heritage into the faith now known as Hinduism."

Teltscher began her study of "discourses" about India by saying, "My methods are deeply indebted to Edward Said's *Orientalism*, the founding work in the study of colonial discourse. I share Said's basic contention that knowledge of the Orient is linked to the exercise of colonial power." Yet she also announced that she would exclude from these "discourses" all unpublished material (i.e., what historians call documents), and she would ignore "the vast body of statistical and economic research" produced from the time of the East India Company. In that she was following Foucault and Said who dismiss all such social research as the manic impulse to classify man and nature into types. By concentrating rather on such books as Kipling's *Kim*, one could easily show that Europeans had little that was objective to say about India.

The campaign to discredit Western scholarship about Asia as mere Orientalism went so far that some Asian scholars became alarmed. The anthropologist Akbar Ahmed said,

> It has led to a cul-de-sac. 'Orientalism' itself has become a cliché, and third world literature is now replete with accusations and labels of Orientalism being hurled by critics and at one another at the slightest excuse. This has had a stultifying effect on the dispassionate evaluation of scholarship.[1]

The Egyptian philosopher Fuad Zakaria joined other Arab scholars in denouncing Said as "unscientific and arbitrary", questioned whether he was serious, and accused him of denigrating all that was secularist and modernizing in Arab culture.

Obviously, any Arab who allowed that there might be some point in this or that Western criticism could be accused of falling into the delusions of Orientalism.[2] B.S. Sayyid has confirmed that Said's book is used by Islamist reactionaries to discredit all forms of Western enquiry, from journalism to human rights campaigns. Said's "recklessness has opened doors to obscurantism and tyranny", Sayyid says.[3] The venerable International

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[1]Akbar Ahmed and Hastings Donnan, eds., *Islam, Globalization and Postmodernity* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 53.

[2]"Edward Said and his Arab Reviewers", in Emmanuel Sivan, *Interpretations of Islam, Past and Present* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

[3]B.S. Sayyid, *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism* (London: Zed Books, 1997).

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Congress of Orientalists took fright and changed its name to the International Congress of Human Sciences in Asia and North Africa. Orientalism was coming to mean Western pseudo-knowledge that was imperialist, racist, ethnocentric, and "profoundly anti-empirical." In postmodernist jargon, it was "the stereotyping disempowerment of the exoticized Other."

German Scholarship and Asian "Decadence"

IT IS QUITE LIKELY that some such description fits some of the sixty thousand books on Asian subjects published in the West between 1800 and 1950. (Anything about *la mission civilisatrice de l'Europe* would be suspect, for example.) But most were either fairly arid, technical research studies on Asian languages, literatures, and religions, or the application of one of the social sciences to what came to be called "area studies." There is, however, one strand of speculative scholarship about Asia that has enjoyed some credit in the West but was generally resented in the East because it implied Asia's unfitness for economic progress otherwise than under the domination of Western capitalism. It is a specifically German line of thought that runs from Hegel to Marx and Weber.

It begins not with the Other but with the Same; that is, with the German obsession with the myth of the Aryan race, which has played so fateful a role in Germany's history. At a time when Germany had no colonies (so that what Foucault and Said call the power/knowledge nexus would be completely irrelevant), German scholars began the search for the oldest forms of religion and of language, in the belief that they would be found among the Aryans, from whom both Indians and Germans had sprung. Sir William Jones' suggestion that Sanskrit and the classical European tongues had a common origin in an Indo-Germanic language was enthusiastically received, and a score of chairs of Indology sprang up across nineteenth-century Germany at a time when Britain, which ruled India, had only three. To this day there are chairs in Germany that combine Indology and Indo-Germanic languages.

The belief in the ancient spiritual glories of India posed the question of India's later "decadence"—and German Romanticism provided the answer. According to Jürgen Lüth,

> Once a people has unfolded its spirit to its fullest expression—thus the Romantic notion runs—it has fulfilled its role in history and only repetition ('revivals'), stagnation and decay can follow. 'Stagnation' became a key-word characterizing Indian civilization after Sankara. It found its way into the general writings of philosophers like Hegel, Marx and Spengler.[4]

With Hegel this became the dogma that India, indeed all Asia, "had no history", at least no *more* history, their sun having set. In his *Lessons on the Philosophy of History*, Hegel said that the history of the Oriental states "is for the most part really *unhistorical*, for it is only the repetition of the same majestic ruin." Karl Marx largely accepted this and volunteered to provide the explanation: Oriental despotism, and the Asiatic Mode of Production. He and Engels argued that Asia had no revolutionary force to propel its "stagnant" or "reactionary and regressive" society into capitalism because the state's monopoly of land-holding reduced all to "general slavery." With no private property in land, there were no social classes, and hence no class conflict—which was the motor of all history to date. Hence there could be no revolution, no progress, no history. In *Capital* we can see Marx using tainted sources—British colonial officers (often admirers of Edmund Burke, determined to find sturdy peasants and paternalist chiefs wherever they looked)—to build up a largely mythical vision of Indian village life. But the theory that only a violent exogenous force, capitalist imperialism, could bring

[4]Jürgen Lüth in H. von Stietencron, ed., *Indology in India and Germany* (Tubingen: Universität Tubingen, 1981), p. 108.

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"progress" to stagnant Asia and never mind the suffering was Marx and Engels at their dogmatic historicist worst. Their undisguised contempt for Asian societies probably exacerbated the Soviet Union's brutal condescension toward its Asian components.[5]

Max Weber, in his sociology of Asian religions, sought to answer the same question as Marx: why did capitalism not arise in Asia? He gave many of the same answers—no private property, no middle class, no cities—and his "patrimonial domination" sounded very like Marx's Asiatic Mode of Production. He made subtle comparisons between Calvinism and Oriental religions but his main theme was the contrast between the rational systematic character of the Occidental mind, particularly in law, science, and industry, and the arbitrary and unstable mentality of Asia.[6] But Weber was careful to add (e.g., at page 248 of *The Religion of China*) that Asia could adopt capitalism. The conditions in which industrialism was invented might be different from the conditions in which it could be reproduced. That would allow Confucian or other Asian values to do the work Calvinism did in the West. This is a breach into which Asian critics have leapt.[7]

Until the Asian tigers gave it the lie, the German story about eternally unchanging Asia had naturally been resented and derided by critics of Orientalism. Said declared dramatically that the Orient refused "to be confined to the fixed status of an object frozen once and for all time in the gaze of Western percipients."[8] Arabs in particular rejected the static image imposed on their societies as though they were as repetitive and unchanging as the desert itself.[9] It was of course no consolation for Asians that their supposed unfitness for capitalism and industry was seized upon by Western Romantics, utopians, libertines, and vegetarians in quest of the simple life and the fuller self. To be sure, the likes of Ruskin, Tolstoy, and Annie Besant for a time found an Oriental echo in Gandhi, Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, and Ananda Coomaraswami, but in today's industrialized (and nuclear-armed) Asia, Gandhi's *khaddar* and *ahimsa* (homespun and non-violence) are as dead as the dodo.

The Real Debate

FAR FROM accepting the assertion that power pollutes knowledge, it was the responsibilities that Britons took over from the faltering Moghul Empire at the close of the eighteenth century that protected them from the sort of philosophy of Asian history that the Germans cultivated. Not that comparable myth-making was unknown among the British; we have seen Marx being taken in by some of it. And the India that Burke conjured up at the impeachment of Warren Hastings (1788-95) was a lurid Chu Chin Chow brand of exoticism—theatrical, literary, and Romantic. But these were aberrations in the course of a great political and cultural contest between two parties of practical and well-intentioned men who called each other the Orientalists and the utilitarians or Anglicists. They were the forerunners of today's exponents of Asian values, and of the IMF.

It is a contest worth recalling today when a fabulous period of Asian expansion has crashed to a stop and been called before the court of Western economic rationalism. If we do not recall it, many Asians will, because at such critical moments the intellectual baggage that Asians arrive with is very different from the prepossessions of Westerners. That was the point Sebastian Mallaby made about the significance of Takamori Saigo's story for

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[5]Bryan Turner, *Marx and the End of Orientalism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1978).

[6]Bryan Turner, *Weber and Islam* (London: Routledge, 1974).

[7]Du Weiming, *Way, Learning and Politics: Essays on the Confucian Intellectual* (Singapore: Institute of East Asian Philosophy, 1989).

[8]Edward Said, "Orientalism Reconsidered", in Francis Barker et al., eds., *Europe and its Others* (Colchester, UK: University of Essex, 1985), p. 16.

[9]Abdallah Laroui, *Islam et Modernité* (Paris: La Découverte, 1987).

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contemporary Japanese (*The National Interest*, Summer 1998). Dramatic events of a century and a half ago, the armed challenge to the modernizing Meiji Restoration, can color perceptions of today's economic crisis. The liveliness of recollections of the Orientalist/utilitarian debate has been demonstrated lately by S.N. Mukherjee.[10]

The contest that raged from 1790 to 1830 set the Orientalist party of Warren Hastings and Sir William Jones ("Oriental Jones") against the utilitarians led by Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, and Lord Macaulay. At that time (and for about two centuries after), Orientalism meant something very different from Said's travesty. It was an ideology, a movement, and a set of social institutions that defended Asian values and languages from the inroads of utilitarianism, evangelicalism, and English. Politicians in Britain and Company officials in India could be found on both sides, as could Indian intellectuals in Calcutta and Bombay.

Philip Francis, Hastings' principal accuser, believed in "imposing Enlightenment and European principles of political economy on India", whereas Hastings, as governor of Bengal, followed Clive's method of working through Indian agents and institutions, and abiding by Indian law. This was not simply a tactic "to manipulate as best he could the residual machinery of the Moghul Empire",[11] for it had a solid philosophical foundation. Hastings knew Persian, Urdu, and Bengali and he was sympathetic to Asian cultures. He resisted (as Burke did later) having British law override Hindu and Islamic legal traditions. He got Oriental Jones, a judge of the Supreme Court, to apply his extraordinary linguistic abilities to the translation and codification of those native laws. He defended a system of taxation that was anathema to the utilitarians. His opponents said he had caught some of the Oriental despot's indifference to corruption.

Among the Sanskrit and Persian classics Hastings had translated was the *Bhagvat Gita*, and in a preface written for it he said something many Asians today would sign with both hands: European values, he said,

> are by no means applicable to the language, sentiments, manners or morality appertaining to a system of society with which we have been for ages unconnected, and of an antiquity preceding even the first efforts of civilization in our own quarter of the globe.

There was nothing Romantic or impractical in these attitudes. Hastings wanted Bengal to prosper, and the Company (and its officers!) to make money. At his trial he showed himself, in contrast to Burke's showmanship, to be pragmatic, technical, analytical, and philological. He let India speak for itself, and cited Islamic law in his defense. Oriental Jones, as Mukherjee has shown, was no Romantic either, for all that he wrote poetry. He had no more time for Indian spirituality and irrationality than he had for Burke and Rousseau, whom he found "wonderfully absurd." The Orientalists thought that India would prosper best under "the true ancient Hindu constitution" and under a personal rather than an impersonal form of government. Burke, as a romantic conservative, was by instinct on their side but he was shocked by the corruption and summary justice of British rule in India, and he blamed (unfairly) the Orientalists for it.

Their more serious opponents were the apostles of philosophical radicalism, utilitarianism, universalism, Anglicism, and evangelicalism. Save on that last score, their leader was Jeremy Bentham, who aspired to be India's lawgiver, with James Mill as his prophet and his agent within the East India Company; Mill in turn got Macaulay his job on the Supreme Council of India. Their aim

[10] S.N. Mukherjee, *Citizen Historian: Explorations in Historiography* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1996).

[11] David Musselwhite, "The Trial of Warren Hastings", in Francis Barker et al., eds., *Literature, Politics and Theory* (London: Methuen, 1986).

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was a culturally and linguistically homogeneous British India dedicated to progress and modernization. Their *bête noire* was Burke, and when he and others accused them of meddling in Indian affairs as a way of getting at their opponents in England, they replied disarmingly, well of course.

And why not? Did they not have in utilitarianism a universal policy that could be applied as well in one country as in another? Economic policy would come from Ricardo, Malthus, and Mill, and there was no need of local knowledge or sympathy. This attitude is carried to absurd extremes in our day, in the application to Asian cultures of rational choice theory, i.e., the reduction of all social and political action to a simplified economic psychology. (See Chalmers Johnson and E.B. Keehn, "A Disaster in the Making: Rational Choice and Asian Studies", *The National Interest*, Summer 1994). In similar vein, there is a passage in Mill's *History of British India* that could have come from a back room at the IMF: "As soon as everything of importance is expressed in writing, a man who is duly qualified may obtain more knowledge of India in one year in his closet in England, than he could obtain during the course of longest life, by the use of his eyes and ears in India."

To which Oriental Jones replied, "No man ever became an historian in his closet." But the utilitarians accused Jones of suffering from "a susceptible imagination" that made him giddy with delusions of vast Indian riches, material and cultural; and they accused his supporters of being "Hindooised." Their pet horror was the "corruption" of Indian society; they had Indians dismissed from all senior positions in administration. The use of Persian as the official language was stopped, and all education was to be in English. Macaulay wrote a Benthamite legal code of civil and criminal procedures to replace the haphazard amalgam of Hindu, Islamic, and English law administered by the courts. In 1835 he wrote a famous Minute on education that still smells of sulfur in Indian nostrils: Britain should aim, he said, at creating "a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste and intellect."

THE ANGLICISTS WON some notable outright victories, such as the outlawing of suttee (widow burning) in 1829, and they prevailed in many other areas, from taxation to education. But two things about their preponderance become especially relevant whenever the conflict of Asian values and Western rationalism breaks out, as it has again in our time.

The first point is that the Anglicists' victories were never final, and the Orientalists never left the field of battle. Clive Dewey has shown that both "assimilators" (Anglicists and evangelicals) and "preservationists" (Orientalists) became entrenched in the Indian Civil Service, and the pendulum swung between them throughout the two hundred years of British rule.[12] "The ICS veered between these two poles, between assimilation and preservation. There were always Westernizers, who wanted to change India, and Orientalists who loved it as it was. What varied was their relative strength." Thus, after decades of free-trade liberalism, the preservation of traditional institutions—joint family, caste, ancient estate—again became the aim of government policy. What the disciples of Ricardo and Mill saw as obstacles to private enterprise, the disciples of Sir Henry Maine and T.H. Green saw as the support of the social fabric.

The second point is how it came about that the Westernizers could gain the upper hand as often as they did. This is where Said's analysis is so deficient that it has been repudiated even by his acolytes, for he argues that the West forced its ideology on the Asians, who suffered passively the crushing imprint of imperialism. In reality, imperial power in Asia was always unsteady and often tenuous. "There was always a revolt somewhere in the

[12]Clive Dewey, *Anglo-Indian Attitudes: The Mind of the Indian Civil Service* (London: Hambledon, 1993), pp. 14-16.

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subcontinent", wrote C.A. Bayly in *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire* (1988). Its ideas and policies won ground only when influential sectors of local opinion—power elites and traditional authorities—were persuaded of them. When they were, what ensued was never a passive acquiescence in Western rationalism or English education but a rough-hewn compromise, some balance or reconciliation between modern and traditional, foreign and local, Asian and Western ideas.

If the past is any guide, the latest collision of Asian and Western values will have the usual inconclusive upshot. There will likely be no irreversible defeat of Asian values and no outright acceptance of Western policies. There was no call to see in Asia's prosperity some defiance of Western rationality, science, or democracy. And there is no call to see in the inevitable failure of competing export-led growth strategies the imminent victory of globalization and universal Westernization. Asians will no doubt continue—and each Asian nation in its own way—to find their own balance between traditional values and utilitarian advantage. □

Only Yesterday–I

"See that little stream—we could walk to it in two minutes. It took the British a month to walk to it—a whole empire walking very slowly, dying in front and pushing forward behind. And another empire walked very slowly backward a few inches a day, leaving the dead like a million bloody rugs. No Europeans will ever do that again in this generation."

"Why, they've only just quit over in Turkey", said Abe. "And in Morocco—"

"That's different. This western-front business couldn't be done again, not for a long time. The young men think they could do it but they couldn't. They could fight the first Marne again but not this. This took religion and years of plenty and tremendous sureties and the exact relation that existed between the classes. The Russians and Italians weren't any good on this front. You had to have a whole-souled sentimental equipment going back further than you could remember. You had to remember Christmas, and postcards of the Crown Prince and his fiancée, and little cafés in Valence and beer gardens in Unter den Linden and weddings at the mairie, and going to the Derby, and your grandfather's whiskers."

"General Grant invented this kind of battle at Petersburg in sixty-five."

"No, he didn't—he just invented mass butchery. This kind of battle was invented by Lewis Carroll and Jules Verne and whoever wrote Undine, and country deacons bowling and marraines in Marseilles and girls seduced in the back lanes of Wurtemberg and Westphalia. Why, this was a love battle—there was a century of middle-class love spent here. This was the last love battle."

—F. Scott Fitzgerald, *Tender is the Night*

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What Combat Does to Man

Private Ryan and its Critics

Eliot Cohen

Among the groups of scared, tired riflemen along the beach were a few intrepid leaders—officers, noncoms, and privates on whose individual backs the big responsibility at the moment lay. They began by example and exhortation to prod the men to get up, leave such poor shelter as they had found, and walk or crawl across the beach flat and up the hills where the enemy was dug in with rifles, mortars, and machine guns.

—U.S. Army history of the Normandy invasion[1]

THE FIRST MOVIE audiences to see *Saving Private Ryan* went in to watch it with the usual accompaniments of that form of entertainment—boxes of popcorn and noisy banter. Two hours and forty minutes later they streamed out in stunned, wet-eyed silence. Veterans of World War II (even those, such as Paul Fussell, who are most caustic about the gulf between those who live war and those who write about it) testified to its fidelity to reality. A chat room devoted to the movie on America Online attracted ten thousand postings in a week, many from veterans or their children, paying tribute to the film. The American Legion created a "Spirit of Normandy" award for Steven Spielberg, and the U.S. Army, in the presence of its chief of staff, General Dennis Reimer, gave him its highest civilian decoration. The Marine veteran who edits the semi-official *Proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute* saw it, came back to his office, shut it down for the day, and took his entire staff to see it.

Oddly enough, however, highbrow critics across the political spectrum had little good to say about *Saving Private Ryan*. Perhaps understanding the movie better than their colleagues on the Right, some on the Left thought that although the movie portrayed war as horrific, it said too many nice things about military virtue. Vincent Canby in the *New York Times* sneered that "with *Saving Private Ryan* war is good again", expressing surprise that the movie suggests, "without irony, if obliquely—that Mom and apple pie were what Americans were fighting and dying for."[2] Writing in the *New York Review of Books*, Louis Menand complained that movie viewers would not be as horrified by German deaths as by American ones. He urged upon the reader the notion that "what makes war appalling isn't the possibility that someone will maim or kill you; it is the possibility that you will maim or kill someone else."[3] One doubts that many infantrymen would share

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[1]Gordon A. Harrison, *Cross-Channel Attack* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1951), p. 320.

[2]Vincent Canby, "War Movies: The Horror and Honor of a Good War", *New York Times*, August 10, 1998.

[3]Louis Menand, "Jerry Don't Surf", *New York Review of Books*, September 24, 1998.

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such philosophic detachment, or, frankly, that responsible citizens (let alone parents and wives) would wish them to. In a protracted polemic directed against not only Spielberg but historian Stephen Ambrose, whose work inspired the film-maker, John Gregory Dunne in *The New Yorker* disdained as "butch and bluster" the views of op-ed writers who found something profound or moving in the movie.[4]

Conservatives have given Spielberg much rougher handling.[5] Some of this reflected personal animus against a well-known liberal, and descended into *ad hominem* accusations. Thus, even one of the more thoughtful critics, Christopher Caldwell, began his essay with an extended discussion of Spielberg's politics, and concluded with grudging praise, but also with a swipe at Spielberg as a representative of his generation. The movie, he wrote, may suggest that the Baby Boomers "understand the stakes of World War II, and the rightness of World War II. But it leads one to suspect that, all the same, they would never have fought it themselves."[6] Setting aside those hundreds of thousands of Baby Boomers who dutifully trooped off to the Vietnam War, how does Spielberg's movie reveal that, one wonders? Other conservatives were harsher yet. John Podhoretz in *The Weekly Standard* decided that the movie showed Spielberg's "limitations not only as an artist but as an adult." And Richard Grenier concluded, egregiously, that, "In Mr. Spielberg's view, the Stars and Stripes, worn on the shoulder, are almost the equivalent of the Swastika."

Many of the conservative critics deplored the movie's failure to rub its audiences' noses in the view that World War II was a Noble Cause, to which Charles Krauthammer aptly replied, "World War II speaks for itself. It needs no spin. Only a moral idiot can doubt its justice."[7] In fact, soldiers at the time (witness Bill Mauldin's Willie and Joe cartoons in *Stars and Stripes*) would have squirmed at patriotic declamations. As Mauldin noted in *Up Front*, the GIs referred to the Germans as "krauts", not "Nazis", and had little use for overt attempts to inspire them to do their job.[8] Still, unlike such movies as *Paths of Glory* or *Platoon*, there can be no question but that *Saving Private Ryan* is suffused with patriotism. It begins and ends with a waving flag; features a dignified George C. Marshall quoting a heartrending letter by Abraham Lincoln to the bereaved mother of five sons; and portrays heroic acts by men of all ranks.

One scene, overlooked in the gore and noise of the battle pieces, makes this point particularly vividly. It depicts the administrative office in Washington where a clerk notices that three boys named Ryan have died within a week, leading to the discovery that all came from the same family. The clerks and their superiors (including a one-armed colonel commanding the unit) are serious and alert; the narrator reading excerpts of letters

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[4]John Gregory Dunne, "Virtual Patriotism: Feeling Good About War", *The New Yorker*, November 16, 1998.

[5]John Podhoretz in *The Weekly Standard* ("All Guts No Glory: Steven Spielberg's World War II", August 3, 1998), Richard Grenier in the *Washington Times* ("Gandhi Spielberg", August 11, 1998), and John Simon in *National Review* ("The Best, or the Biggest?", August 17, 1998) all panned the movie; while the centrist *The Economist* and *The New Republic* were no better than tepid in their treatment of it. Stephen Hunter of the *Washington Post* wrote the most perceptive review ("*Private Ryan*: Steven Spielberg's Unflinching Tribute to the Men Who Conquered Hell", July 24, 1998) and a cutting critique of the critics ("Strafing *Private Ryan*: Conservatives Say Spielberg's Film is Too Far Left. They're Wrong. It's Conservative, and Right", August 9, 1998).

[6]Christopher Caldwell, "Spielberg at War", *Commentary* (October 1998).

[7]Charles Krauthammer, "Debating *Pvt. Ryan*", *Washington Post*, August 14, 1998.

[8]Bill Mauldin, *Up Front*, reprinted in *Reporting World War II* (New York: Library of America, 1995), vol. II, p. 315. This, the second in a two-volume collection of reportage, depicts well the kinds of characters and situations covered in the movie.

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of commanders to bereaved families describes only good soldiers and fine men. A satirist or a skeptic would not depict that kind of military bureaucracy as efficient or humane. Spielberg, however, allows not a whiff of irony to drift into this scene.

THE MOVIE'S apparent theme is whether it is worth risking the lives of eight men to save one. Captain John Miller, played by Tom Hanks, begins by describing the effort to locate the last Ryan boy as a "public relations mission." During the interval between the movie's two great battle scenes he and his men wrestle with the problematic nature of their task. "We got mothers too", one private remarks sarcastically, and then, pausing, "except maybe the captain." But a tall paratroop captain through whose unit Miller passes surprises him by affirming the worth of the mission. By the time he and his squad have found Ryan, the tough, simple, and unsentimental Sergeant Horvath concedes that this may be the "only worthwhile thing we've done in this whole awful shitty mess." Even the most bitter and skeptical member of the squad, Private Reiben, who is prepared to despise the man whom they have come to rescue, has reconciled himself to the mission. Reiben, who feels particularly keenly the losses suffered to this point, finds himself in a foxhole with Ryan just before the climactic battle with the advancing Germans. In one of several brilliant moments of wordless acting, he gives Ryan a hard look and a slight nod, indicating that he too has accepted not only Ryan, but the value of their task.

The movie's conclusion makes it clear that the most important soldier of them all, Miller, has come to believe that the mission has indeed been worth it, with one haunting proviso: the survivor must attempt, somehow, to redeem the sacrifices made by those who fell. The basic problem here—pulling back a sole surviving son from combat—was a real one in World War II.[9] The broader question of risking many men to save one occurs frequently in war, as Americans have seen even in the last few years when pilots have had to bail out over hostile territory in Bosnia and Iraq. In fact, however, the movie's importance does not lie in its treatment of this question. Rather, it resides in its depiction of men in battle, and of the nature of military leadership.

Even Spielberg's sharpest critics concede his artistic skill in depicting combat. Still, several of the more desperate commentators attempt to demonstrate their bona fides as military historians by resorting to quibbles—heaping scorn, for example, on the rank insignia painted in white on Miller's helmet, which, they insist, would merely have made him a target for German snipers. Richard Grenier remarks, "I know—unlike the captain in *Private Ryan*—that officers never wear insignia of rank in combat." Untrue, as it happens, since policy on this matter has varied widely from war to war and unit to unit, and more than one officer has chosen to disregard higher authority on this issue. More to the point, the army official history of the Normandy invasion has in it pictures of two battle-stained captains with white bars prominently displayed on the front of their helmets.[10]

A fair-minded and better read military historian would point to more substantial and serious divergences from D-Day reality, such as the absence of naval gunfire, often delivered at pointblank range by destroyers operating perilously close to the shore, which helped suppress the German positions dominating the beach. More serious yet is the implausible nature of the tactical problem inherent in the final shootout between an understrength pla-

[9]See Donald F. Crosby, S.J., *Battlefield Chaplains: Catholic Priests in World War II* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994), p. 136, for one such episode.

[10]Harrison, pp. 316, 439. In truth, to this day American soldiers will often wear "subdued" (i.e., black or darkened) rank insignia on battle uniforms, although at various times and in various units even these will disappear.

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toon of American soldiers and what looks to be a company-strength German mechanized task force, an episode that despite all of its drama has too much Hollywood in it. This scene escapes reality in certain technical and tactical aspects that undermine its plausibility, as when Corporal Upham waits until the shooting starts to begin delivering ammunition to a machine gun in a tower.

At a deeper level yet, one might note that no one can hope to portray combat per se: battle produces unique hells in air, on land, and at sea, in different theaters of war, and at different times and places. Movies, moreover, invariably create distortions of time, atmosphere, and emotional experience that prevent them from duplicating reality.[11] But these reservations, though better founded, also miss the point. Spielberg has captured battle with as much fidelity as one can outside of pure documentary, and in some ways rather better.

Paul Fussell has suggested that the first twenty-five minutes of the movie be made into a documentary entitled, "Omaha Beach: Aren't You Glad You Weren't There?" Indeed, the heart-stopping realism of the D-Day scene alone would make the movie worthwhile. That realism, however, goes far beyond a naturalistic rendition of maimed bodies and screaming men. The movie's uniqueness lies less in its graphic depiction of what combat does to man—the exposed viscera, spouting blood, and headless bodies—than in its portrayal of how man fares in combat. One lesson concerns the harsh penalties often exacted by sentiment or folly in war: a soldier trying to rescue a French girl dies an agonizing death from a sniper's bullet, and a glider reinforced to protect one man's life—a general's—becomes unmanageable and crashes as a result, killing almost all on board. Other movies show blood and guts aplenty, but few show death catching men so randomly, before they have had a chance to fight, or (in this case) even to disembark to prepare to fight. Randomness pervades the movie, to include the basic premise: the death of the three other Ryan brothers, necessitating the rescue of the fourth.

Not merely randomness, but a realistic weirdness characterizes Spielberg's portrayal of war. The eery dialogue in the death grapple between a knife-wielding German soldier and one of Miller's men at the very end of the film, the murderous cool of the squad sniper as he mutters Old Testament prayers while marking the range to his victims, the darkly comic confrontation of two soldiers with jammed weapons who throw their helmets at each other before reaching for pistols—all of these scenes have occurred, we know, in real war, and all reveal something of human nature.[12] "Why can't you bastards give us a chance?", screams the medic after a burst of fire kills the man whose wounds he has just staunched. Small wonder that another soldier shouts, "Let them burn!" after a flamethrower turns the German occupants of a machine gun nest into human torches. Veterans have long known (although rarely reported to the folks back home) that sometimes they take prisoners and sometimes not, and sometimes they may shoot a few before battle fury subsides and then let the rest survive. These scenes too have a terribly convincing quality. Horrible as some of these deeds are, American soldiers appear not so much to be committing atrocities as yielding to a kind of combat insanity. Their callous joking while sorting through the dog tags of dead soldiers contrasts with the tenderness with which they care for a dying comrade, which contrasts yet again with their hard desire to shoot in cold blood the hapless German soldier who also was only doing his duty in gunning down their buddy.

Spielberg captures the strange mind tricks played by combat. Several times during

[11] A competent military historian, Peter Maslowski, has explored these issues thoughtfully in "Reel War vs. Real War", *Military History Quarterly* (Summer 1998).

[12] For example, during the second Battle of Bull Run during the Civil War, Union and Confederate soldiers suddenly meeting one another in the woods threw stones at each other before using their weapons.

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the movie Captain Miller, stunned by noise and what he has seen, becomes weirdly detached from a reality that seems to have become suspended, silent, and remote. Within a few seconds he returns to the here and now, in a phenomenon reported by veterans of infantry combat. He suffers, moreover, from the physical manifestations (in particular, an unstoppable tremor) of the combat fatigue that was only beginning to be fully understood during the Second World War as something altogether different from lack of resolve or mere cowardice. This too is subtly portrayed: at several points Miller tells Sergeant Horvath that he doubts his ability ever to explain to anyone what they have seen and done. When he says that he has journeyed so far from home that he doubts he can ever return, he refers not only to the physical distance and mortal perils that lie between Normandy and small-town Pennsylvania.

The truthfulness of the movie thus extends to the non-combat scenes as well. The mock homosexual banter of the soldiers, the assortment of human types found in any military unit, the pathetic wish of the outsider (Corporal Upham, the morally problematic translator dragged along on the mission) to be accepted and the reluctance of the veterans to have him—these ring true. So too does Ryan's adamant refusal to abandon his exposed comrades when Miller finally finds him. He expresses a sentiment shared by countless soldiers when he tells rescuers that these are the only brothers he has left. There are other poignant moments, as when Miller and Horvath remember, with mirth ever so slightly tinged with hysteria, some of the characters who have served with them—and suddenly realize that all of these men are gone, and that they are mocking their idiosyncrasies. There are grimly comic moments too, as Miller begins to despair of ever finding Ryan after several false starts.

When Miller reports back to the beach a few days after the landing in order to receive his new mission, he glances at a couple of GIs eating fresh salami sandwiches and shaving with hot water. In an instant one sees on his face (again, without a word) the resentment and then the resignation that front-line soldiers feel when they see rear-area troops enjoying what civilians think of as the most trivial luxuries. In the same instant the thought occurs to the viewer that we, so far removed from this world, would normally have thought of the lounging men as combat troops (they are, after all, no more than a couple of miles from the front); but, in fact, they are almost as distant from what Miller and his men have gone through as we are. A similar sense of distance begins and ends the movie, when, in a contemporary Normandy cemetery, an aged veteran comes to terms with the aching losses the movie depicts. On the faces of his pleasant and attractive blonde grandchildren one reads a vague concern about the old man, but a complete lack of understanding of what he has experienced, and how it consumes him still.

SAVING PRIVATE RYAN's essential psychological truth supports its second great theme: leadership. Reviewers who, in a curiously confessional mood, declared with Roger Ebert that, "I identified with Upham, and I suspect many honest viewers will agree with me", missed this point.[13] To be sure, part of the movie's power lies in the anxiety it engenders in its viewers that, in similar circumstances, they might have acted like Upham rather than, let us say, Reiben. Still, Upham is, in fact, a minor and certainly unattractive figure: his last act is a cowardly murder, committed in a hopeless attempt to recover some self-respect following his failure to come to the aid of a comrade in combat. Rather, the men to watch are those in the original squad led by Hanks' character. In this regard, the D-Day sequence bears watching (if one has a strong stomach) more than once. The first time the viewer sees chaos and horror simply: death hammering on the ramps of tossing landing

[13]Roger Ebert, "*Saving Private Ryan*", *Chicago Sun-Times*, July 24, 1998.

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craft before men can get out, and the scourge of shot and shell on that open beach. The second time, however, one notes other things, in particular the improvisation and determination that, in the end, made the landings there a success. A thread of tactical skill, only intermittently visible to those watching, underlies the wiping out of a German bunker, and Miller's company's passage to the exit paths that were, in fact, the tactical objectives of the improvised teams of men at Omaha. In that breakthrough Miller does not indulge in heroics; he makes decisions, gives orders, and sends his men first into the fire when that makes sense. It is Sergeant Horvath who yells, "We're in business!", and leads the breakthrough.

Tom Hanks clearly has some leadership ability himself. When the other actors mutinied against the retired Marine veteran who put them through ten days of misery to prepare for the combat scenes, Hanks shamed them into staying the course. His portrait of Miller as a leader is flawless. If civilians should see the movie to remind themselves of, in Siegfried Sassoon's words, "the hell where youth and laughter go", second lieutenants should see it to reflect on what it means to lead men in battle. Miller manages a delicate balance between intimacy with his men and a carefully maintained distance from them. He treats the fumbling and panicky Upham with amused authority, but subtly pulls him into the unit. He gently helps Ryan to remember his fallen brothers, and then, equally gently but firmly nonetheless, declines to let the private peer into his new commander's soul. His personal background is a mystery to his men, and he keeps it that way, playing on their curiosity to serve the ends of discipline. He encourages them to gripe, but reminds them that gripes "only travel up, never down": he will never complain to them. He participates in their banter, but there is no doubt that he is the boss. That, as he says to Private Ryan at the end, "is non-negotiable." Even so, Miller cannot always bark orders; he must at times persuade, cajole, and even manipulate his men in order to get them to do what he wants. A military historian once observed that in all armies there is a silent vote that occurs before men move forward, and this too we see in *Saving Private Ryan*.

Miller's men have noticed his hand shake as he tries to hold a compass, and although he attempts to joke them out of their anxiety, they eye him with a mixture of solicitude for a beloved leader and raw fear of losing the man they need to keep them alive. In yet another wordless moment, when overcome with grief at the death of one of his men, he manages—but just barely—to find a shell hole to yield to the emotional storm, so that his men will not see him crack. The frantic look he casts over his shoulder to make sure that he is hidden from view reflects the instincts of the leader dominating and controlling, with a supreme effort of will, the anguish of the man. It is not just that he has seen too much horror, or that he grieves over a single man. A young officer learns that he must place in strict order of priority "my mission, my men, myself." Miller keeps his own fears and longings very much to himself, but he broods about the price his men have paid to achieve their missions ever since his war began. He attempts to convince himself that the men he has killed—and by this he means his *own* men, who have died carrying out *his* orders—have, through their sacrifices, saved the lives of many more. He recognizes the tenuousness of this rationalization, but he clings to it to stay sane.

Real-life combat leaders exude the kind of quiet self-confidence and purpose that Miller displays on film. They also suffer the kind of pressures that bring him close to the breaking point on numerous occasions—as when he begins shouting at a passing column of paratroopers, or when his men nearly dissolve in mutiny before he intervenes to get them in hand. In the end, their men follow the Millers of this world not simply because of The Cause or even formal discipline and mere habit, but because of a moral authority rooted in competence and character. Miller's men, on the other hand, prove themselves, with one exception, to be average heroes: guys who hate

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their duty but do it, and do it to a high standard and despite their fears. Miller himself appears to us as an altogether believable leader of a type always in scarce supply, but frequently enough encountered to be familiar to those who know soldiers.

IF *SAVING PRIVATE RYAN* offers real insight into the nature of battle and leadership, why so little attention to these aspects of it on the part of critics? There is a personal reaction to Spielberg here, puzzling if only because no evidence suggests that he is anything other than a considerably nicer type of human being than many other spectacularly successful Hollywood producers. As for his politics, they have nothing to do with whether he has created great art. Perhaps distortion has arisen from many critics' temptation to discuss a movie genre—"the war flick"—rather than to discuss war, particularly if they have not experienced it themselves. A desire to fight cultural battles rather than meditate upon real ones has similarly distorted much of the reaction to the movie.

There is, however, a deeper explanation for critical disquiet with *Saving Private Ryan*. The movie offers no easy way out for its characters or its audience, and hence for critics. D-Day was, we all know, a smashing strategic success—but now we have an inkling of the horrors that accompany even lopsided victories. Miller's mission is a morally just one, we come to believe—but not so unambiguously right that survivors of it can brace themselves up and say, "Yes, the casualties were worth it." Miller is a great leader—but he has killed his men when he could have kept them alive, and teeters on the edge of psychic collapse. Courage and skill bring success—but never seem able to guarantee physical survival or psychological peace: the lone surviving veteran in the cemetery at Normandy can never know that he has "earned this." Most troubling of all, the men who fought this great war did their duty and achieved one of the most monumental victories of all time—but their children and grandchildren, the beneficiaries of their sacrifices, can only stare in sympathetic puzzlement at them. The movie raises troubling questions, and too many critics insist on having them answered. *Saving Private Ryan* challenges our moral seriousness, and that is a daunting thing for a summer film to have done. But it is also what distinguishes a great piece of art from a merely good one. □

Only Yesterday–II

Above all—what Keegan calls 'the ultimate mystery'—why did men continue to fight for so long under such appalling conditions? . . . For a generation that has never known war and is encouraged to seek counselling and compensation if they fall down and graze their knees, it may well be the most difficult to answer. Was it indoctrination of patriotism in youth? Press propaganda? Intimidation? The actual pleasure in fighting and killing? Or what the Germans termed *Grabenkameradschaft*, the comradeship of the trenches, the determination not to let one's mates down? Anyone with actual military experience is likely to discount all these except the last, and all the literature shows its enormous importance.

—Sir Michael Howard, *The Times Literary Supplement*, November 13, 1998

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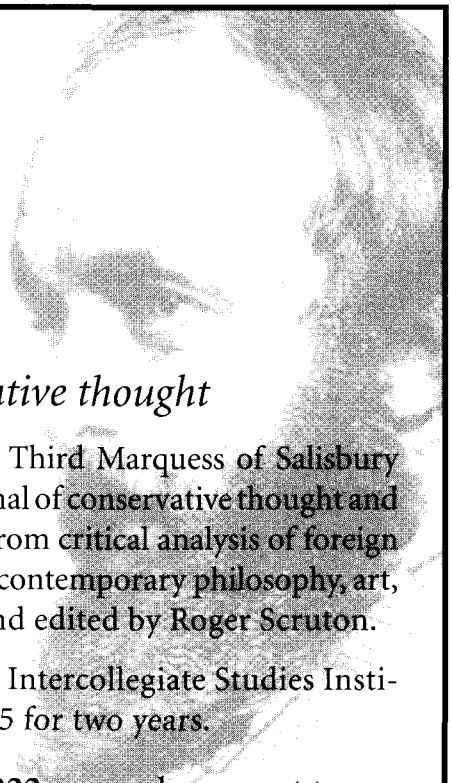

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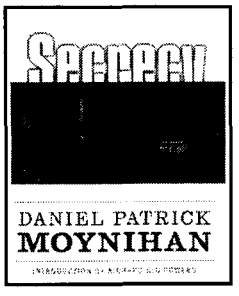

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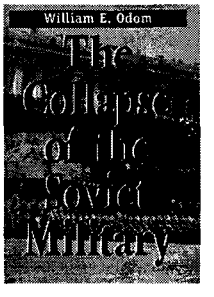

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The Other France

H.J. Kaplan

Rosemary Wakeman, *Modernizing the Provincial City: Toulouse, 1945-1975* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 323 pp., $45.

TOULOUSE, metropole of the Languedoc or Midi-Pyrénées area in southwestern France, went through an exhilarating experience after World War II. The city grew. Not for the first time in its two thousand-year history; and not all by itself, since something similar was happening (after the long years of depression, war, defeat, and German occupation) in most other provincial centers. Still, the postwar development of Toulouse was dramatic, and distinctive enough to engage the attention of Rosemary Wakeman, an American student of French history and more specifically of urban affairs. Thanks to Harvard University Press, Ms. Wakeman has now published *Modernizing the Provincial City: Toulouse, 1945-1975*, a thoughtful study and quite worthy of general attention, even if it provides more detail about yesterday's bureaucratic struggles (over zoning regulations, planning conceptions, and real estate promotions) than most of us will ever want or need to know.

For reasons that escaped me when I first came to live here (as they still do), Toulouse has never held much attraction for tourists, although in medieval times it was a stop on the famous pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. But then so were a lot of now quite obscure places, like Saint Bertrand de Comminges. Even the guidebooks feel obliged to quote the disparaging remarks of travel-writers from the north like Stendhal, or foreigners like Henry James and Edith Wharton, who were put off by the lack of amenities, the accent, and perhaps by a certain rough-hewn and stubborn quality of the natives. It does not surprise me to find a lot of Scottish and Irish names in the neighborhood, like my friends the O'Byrnes, who have a château at Saint-Géry on the Tarn River; and to discover that Jenny Courtois' house on the rue Mage was built by a man named McCarthy in the eighteenth century; or that, while the rest of France goes bonkers over soccer, the Toulousans have a passion for rugby, a game—at least until recently—of amateurs and locals, not imported dancers from Brazil. All this, whether cause or consequence or both, may help to explain why this town has been left to its own devices and little heard of in the wider world, at least since 1249, when it succumbed to the Albigensian crusade and became part of the kingdom of France.

An attractive place, nevertheless. Toulouse is in the valley of the Garonne, nestled in a bend of the river and in close touch with a rich and varied countryside. The old town, its characteristic red brick center now circled by green and white suburbs and an occasional cluster of towers, is still a hub of the Canal du Midi, which since the seventeenth century has made it possible to ship merchandise from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic without exposing oneself to the Barbary pirates. In those days it was still the center of the pastel trade, which enriched many Toulousan families and left us with many fine mansions. A center of learning since Roman times, and the birthplace of many famous men (like the mathematician Fermat), it quite naturally became home not

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only to the aerospace and high-tech industries, but also to a great university, not to forget the oldest think tank in France, the Académie des Jeux Floraux, or the impressive collection of romanesque sculpture in the lovely old monastery of Les Augustins. Politically, it has always been a bastion of the Radical-Socialists and home of the daily *La Dépêche du Midi*, which now makes it comfortable with the so-called "plural Left" of Lionel Jospin, who is mayor of a nearby town.

Ms. Wakeman, in any event, was bound to raise issues of greater import than Toulouse itself, since the three decades she deals with—1945 to 1975—were the ones enduringly designated by Jean Fourastié as "glorious" in his now classic study, *Les Trentes Glorieuses, ou la Révolution Invisible de 1946-1975*, published by Fayard in 1979. This was the great leap forward in the course of which the French divested themselves of their overseas empire, more than doubled their per capita income, refurbished their welfare state, and nevertheless managed year after year to invest upwards of 20 percent of their GDP in new plant and capital equipment, with the result that—with Germany still divided and Eastern Europe still held hostage by the Soviet Union—they were able in the 1970s and early 1980s to envisage their future with a clarity and confidence that are sorely lacking today.

During *les trentes glorieuses* the French duplicated the experience of other modern industrial nations by effecting a massive movement of people and resources from the countryside to the cities, which by 1975 had absorbed something like three-quarters of the population. And although this could not but entail some social disruption, it was accomplished with what struck me, working in our Marshall Plan Mission in Paris at that time, as a minimum of hardship and fuss. By the time Fourastié was publishing his book, the heavily rural France we had discovered during and immediately after World War II—the *Vieille France* of Roger Martin du Gard, of Marcel Aymé, and indeed of most of the writers left over, as it were, from the pre-war period—was already a thing of the past. The country had become predominantly urban; and since then the movement has continued, albeit at a slower pace. Toulouse, for example, has "mutated from a sleepy regional town to an industrial and scientific metropolis with an extended suburban realm and a population well over 600,000", as we are informed in *Modernizing the Provincial City*.

GRANTING ALL THIS, it is nevertheless too much to say, as Ms. Wakeman does in her introductory chapter, that "the French were quite daunted, even obsessed, by the dimensions of this urban revolution" or that the questions to which it gave rise "took on crisis proportions within public debate." The oddity, rather—and this is why Jean Fourastié speaks in his subtitle of an *invisible* revolution—is how little attention was paid in France and elsewhere to a transformation so vast.

Without pretending to offer an explanation of this anomaly—the fact that *les trentes glorieuses* and their consequences were so largely and so long ignored by "the French", i.e., by the people who speak in this country's name—I would suggest that we begin by rounding up the usual suspects, namely the political classes, as they are now called, in Paris.

These were not and are not necessarily politicians, in the strict sense of the term. They are more likely to be middle-class executives, educators, and journalists, although they tend to concern themselves more with politics—especially *la grande politique*—than provincials do; and to have a more active interest in general ideas and literature and the arts. The great issues for "the French" during the period we are talking about—the Cold War, for example, or decolonization, or the influence of American popular culture—were defined in Paris, a world-class city which, while Toulouse, Grenoble, and Lyon were doubling or tripling their populations, remained petrified within its twenty arrondissements. The capital's surrounding

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countryside, the Île-de-France, was increasingly urbanized, to be sure, but Paris *intra muros* actually lost people throughout most of those thirty years; and this, together with the fact that the city on the Seine was and remains so much more than the center of a nation-state, surely helps to explain why the Parisian deep thinkers, who continue to represent this country in the eyes of the wider world, failed to see what was going on in the boondocks during *les trentes glorieuses*.

Now of course the term has passed into the common parlance; one hears it constantly used by people who haven't a clue where it comes from, not that Jean Fourastié would have cared. The point I would make is that this tendency of the Parisian political classes to ignore what was derisively known (in another famous book of the period) as "the French desert" seems in certain respects to be structural, an inherited condition, and thus extremely difficult to cure. Not impossible, one hopes, given time; but meanwhile the fascist movement of Messrs. Le Pen and Mégret—still without a single deputy in Paris—feeds on the hopes and fears of the provinces, and grows apace.

ROSEMARY WAKEMAN is identified on the cover of *Modernizing the Provincial City* as adjunct assistant professor at Fordham University and fulsomely praised (on another page of the cover) by two of her colleagues in what appears to be a flourishing field: the production of footnotes to the history of France, its development and "mentalities", a subject which seems endlessly to fascinate American professors and doctoral candidates. "A great book", says Donald Reid, author of *Paris Sewers and Sewermen: Realities and Representations*. "A major monograph in urban history", says Herrick Chapman, author of *State Capitalism and Working Class Radicalism in the French Aircraft Industry*.

These are publishers' blurbs, and it would be unfair to hold them against Ms. Wakeman even if they did not go on as they do, covering an entire page, to cite chapter and verse in support of some rather extravagant claims—to the effect, say, that *Modernizing the Provincial City* explains how the new Toulouse as a "dynamic center of research and industry" arose out of the dilapidated old city through "the interplay between political and social forces in Toulouse and ministries in Paris [which] led to the construction of a new urban image", or that by "examining the transformation of urban space, housing, business and politics", Wakeman arrives at an "understanding of modernization as involving the cultural construction of an image as much as the articulation of any particular credo, technique, economic mode or esthetic", and this suggests that "her work could play an important role in theoretical debates over the nature of modernization." Et cetera. At this point I would expect our author, who has provided us with 321 pages of facts and figures (including the notes, a bibliography, and an index) will exhale gently; although the sort of jargon I have quoted seems to go with the territory, since it also mars her own prose.

Thus, for example, Ms. Wakeman is not above assuring us solemnly that "modernism simply monumentalized the new social constellation and corporate-state power as self-referential myths", and leaving us with our bare faces hanging out to try to guess what this means. She makes a laudable effort to sound more modest in her conclusions, but cannot resist instructing us that "both modernism and modernization are, like all historic processes, unevenly developed across time and space" and that "the actual depth of [modernism's] socioeconomic power and cultural imperialism is a thorny issue, as is the notion of a spatial character to capitalism." All of which, to our relief, seems to leave matters moot, at least in respect to what she is talking about here, which I take to be simply that during *les trentes glorieuses* the infamous "desert" was somewhat reduced and power was devolved on the provinces. The result was that regional authorities and the local city hall could, in the case of Toulouse, allocate resources and shape the city's future without interference from the planners up

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north, the object being what is called *l'aménagement du territoire*.

In any event, and leaving the jargon aside, Ms. Wakeman is clearly talented and energetic and has sufficiently immersed herself in her subject to tell her story intelligibly, so that we do learn that the premises of today's aerospace industry, for example, already existed in Toulouse before and during World War II, and that it was the enormous expansion of the economy after the war, rather than a bureaucratic decision to construct an allegedly new image, that led to increased employment and a larger physical plant, as well as to such projects as the new research center at Rangueil-Lespiner. The city's modernization, in short, was not in the first instance merely a program or an idea sucked out of their thumbs by central planners and intellectuals, although of course they got into the act, as they always do, for better or worse. What made it all happen, however, as common sense would suggest, was simply that the situation cried out for it. The city was growing exponentially, slums had to be cleared and new housing provided, the old urban center had to contend with huge increases of traffic, artisans and services were needed—and, as the country on the whole was prosperous, financial resources were at hand.

SO WHAT ELSE is new? The question arises whether the impressive amount of lore Ms. Wakeman has gathered about this development can instruct us on matters of more general interest, e.g., on the stubborn *otherness* of France that continues so remarkably to irritate our political leadership, conservative and liberal alike, and to haunt the imagination of our academic elites. In my opinion it can, and this is why the appearance of *Modernizing the Provincial City* is worth noting in *The National Interest* and not merely in *The Journal of Footnotes to French History*, or something of the sort.

On the strength of this book Ms. Wakeman should be allowed, I submit, to drop the word "adjunct" from her title and become an honest-to-God assistant professor, if only because she provides a coherent account of how the Place Saint-Georges (the charming old city square in which the Protestant Calas was executed, provoking the famous anti-church campaign of Voltaire) was saved from the ruthless slum clearance project that destroyed so much of the neighborhood nearby; or why the relocation of the university at Le Mirail and the attempt to construct an American-style campus around it ended so badly. These episodes are *petite histoire*, interesting to the participants and arguably useful as object lessons, but *Modernizing the Provincial City* is too immersed in city hall politics on one hand, and in sociological theory on the other, to make much more of them, as Ms. Wakeman confesses in her concluding chapter. Nor does it tell us anything we did not already know about how the French became and are becoming what they have been and are.

What it can do, rather, is first of all to suggest a question more pertinent to us—and certainly more accessible—at this stage in our own development as a country and a culture: Why should we care? And secondly to provide an answer, one that may or may not satisfy our own political class but may help to explain why books of this sort continue to proliferate in an America which—so notoriously as I write these lines—has so much else on its mind.

It lies, I suggest, in the genius the French have displayed throughout their history for articulating, generalizing, and projecting their problems, so that it becomes quite natural for them to deal with municipal sewage as if it were a paradigm for The Human Condition, a.k.a. Man's Fate; or, in devising seating arrangements for their first National Assembly, after 1789, to come up with the enduring and by now universal designations of the Left and the Right.

Enduring does not necessarily mean forever, not even here. We are now a long way from *les trentes glorieuses*. The economy is in the doldrums and—the respectable Right having disappeared into the trap so cunningly

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set for them by Mr. Mitterrand, with a little help from Mr. Chirac—the country is preparing morosely to consummate its merger into Europe, whatever that means. Instead of Right and Left we have *la pensée unique*, which does not translate easily but means that social democracy, the welfare state, and the sort of thinking about manners and morals that goes with them have become, if not The Human Condition, a.k.a. Man's Fate, the only game in town. And if you can't beat it you might as well join it. So I heard yesterday on public television, in a commentary on an article by Mr. d'Ormesson, who (when I was living in Paris) used to write for the right-wing daily, *Le Figaro*.

And here is another footnote to French history: *Le Figaro* is the largest Parisian daily. If you add its circulation to that of its left-wing rival, *Le Monde*, you come up with a total rather less than the circulation of the largest provincial daily, which I believe is published in Brest.

I have not yet seen Mr. d'Ormesson's text, but I don't expect much from it, frankly, although he is a brilliant writer and a card-carrying member of the Parisian political class. The problem, I fear, is once again with the latter. Only this time, and perhaps for the first time in their long and distinguished history, "the French", although they remain as voluble as ever, seem to be at a loss for words. □

H.J. Kaplan is a retired foreign service officer who lives in Toulouse. Author of several novels, he was for many years *Partisan Review*'s Paris correspondent.

The Cult of Secrecy

Allen Weinstein

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Secrecy: The American Experience* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 262 pp., $22.50.

THE MOST recent public service that Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan has performed for his country was his able stewardship of the bipartisan Commission on Protecting and Reducing Government Secrecy. The commission's valuable 1997 report, "Secrecy: A Brief Account of the American Experience", contains the most sensible recommendations offered in recent years for reversing the U.S. national security "culture of secrecy", an outmoded eighty-year inheritance of two world wars and the Cold War. Moynihan's critique has special credibility because of his background as a fiercely anti-communist cold warrior during his years as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and in the Senate. Throughout the Nixon-Ford-Carter decade of détente-oriented policies toward the Soviet Union, Moynihan called for waging a more aggressive "war of ideas" against our chief adversary. In the Reagan-Bush years, the senator was notable for his unabashed hawkishness toward the Soviets. This made Moynihan's recent work as chairman of the Secrecy Commission an adversarial event of consequence for opponents of greater "openness"—past and current American intelligence community figures—who are vehement in their complaints about Moynihan's proposals for reducing excessive government secrecy.

Now Senator Moynihan has expanded his appendix to the commission's report into an elegant, quotable, scholarly, and timely book. *Secrecy: The American Experience* should be required reading for all those, in or out of

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government, who profess serious concern for the national interest. Historian Richard Gid Powers' extended introductory essay both frames the issues and sets the stage for Moynihan's eloquent exposition of the dangers and errors wrought by excessive governmental secrecy. Moynihan builds skillfully on the insights (which he cites) of Edward Shils' early Cold War landmark, *The Torment of Secrecy*, and especially on Max Weber's analysis of how government bureaucracies metastasize in their self-protectiveness: "As Weber has shown, a culture of bureaucracy will always tend to foster a culture of secrecy."

With praise having been offered, I should declare an interest. Moynihan and Powers both cite and comment favorably on my research, as they do on a number of other recent scholars of twentieth-century national security issues. Since neither man has yet read my forthcoming book on Soviet espionage in America during the thirties and the war years, however, it is worth noting that what my coauthor Alexander Vassiliev and I found in Soviet intelligence archives further confirms two of *Secrecy*'s major conclusions: that a number of U.S. government officials engaged in spying of a highly damaging nature on behalf of the Soviet Union during this period, and that the Soviet espionage networks had been largely dismantled in 1945 after the defections of Igor Gouzenko and Elizabeth Bentley. Thus the "Second Red Scare" that followed—with the politically corrosive efforts of the House Un-American Activities Committee, Joe McCarthy, and others—was belated and fundamentally injurious to American national security.

Moynihan outlines crisply and with a wealth of anecdotes the evolution of government secrecy from the U.S. entrance into World War I through today's post-Cold War dilemmas. He devotes chapters to the secrecy process as it developed in World War II, with special attention given to the impact of atomic weapons research on producing a fully articulated "culture of secrecy"; to internal security issues of the Truman-Eisenhower years; the Vietnam War; Watergate; and the Iran-Contra controversy of the Reagan era. Moynihan quotes approvingly the conclusion of Glenn T. Seaborg, Atomic Energy Commission chairman from 1961 to 1971, in a 1994 *Science* article titled "Secrecy Runs Amok", that "security classification of information became in the 1980s an arbitrary, capricious, and frivolous process, almost devoid of objective criteria." Before leaving the AEC, Moynihan notes, Seaborg had his private diary and journal "cleared virtually without deletion." Several years later, however, after retrieving his journal from the Department of Energy's classifiers for a writing task, Seaborg found that—although cleared previously—now "passage after passage had been redacted, much of it explicitly public information . . . some of it purely personal (like his account of going trick-or-treating with his children on Halloween)."

A more serious example of counterproductive obsession with secrecy involved the fact that, although President of the United States, "Truman was never told of the Venona decryption", a decision made by high-ranking army generals. Because of this, Moynihan speculates, Truman questioned the reality of much Soviet spying during the war years since "all [he] ever 'learned' about Communist espionage" came not from solid U.S. intelligence data but from his Republican adversaries' investigations and speeches.

SECRECY addresses throughout the central question raised first in its introduction: "How, then, did the United States of America stumble into the shadows of a secrecy system that still produces more than six million classified documents a year and that pokes and prods some three million individuals to certify their worthiness to be trusted with papers stamped Confidential, Secret and Top Secret?" Moynihan is a particularly exuberant polemicist in describing two ironic, unintended consequences of secrecy's pervasiveness on U.S. national security issues, especially during the Cold War era: the bureau-

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cratic classifiers' often inaccurate analysis of basic facts and trends, and, in the American public-at-large, the terrible damage that unnecessary secrecy wrought by encouraging widespread belief in a *Walpurgisnacht* of conspiracy theories.

Moynihan shows in some detail how, most egregiously, the CIA—abetted by various influential special government reports—dramatically overestimated both the economic and military strength of the Soviet Union for decades. These assessments by the intelligence bureaucracies resulted in a number of fundamental U.S. policies toward our chief Cold War adversary being based upon erroneous calculations of the latter's actual situation and future prospects. A public airing and debate over these findings *might* have resulted in a more objective base on which to make policy; but during the Cold War period, as Moynihan notes, "with the vast expansion in bureaucratization came a remarkable routinization of secrecy." Closer to home, Moynihan points out that U.S. support for the Bay of Pigs invasion proceeded without any attention by its planners to a major public opinion survey, which described the widespread popular support on the island then enjoyed by Fidel Castro and his recently empowered revolutionary government. Unfortunately, in this instance as in others, "open sources simply had no standing."

As for the notable spread of conspiracy mania, Moynihan identifies a range of these in arguing that excessive concern for governmental secrecy has reinforced a "paranoid style"—not simply among the usual suspects, ideologues of the extreme Left and Right, but among ordinary Americans. Fully three-quarters now blame agencies of the U.S. government for alleged involvement in John F. Kennedy's assassination, while an even greater number, according to a 1997 CNN-*Time* poll cited by the author, "believe that their government is hiding knowledge of the existence of extraterrestrial life forms."

In his final chapter, "A Culture of Openness", Moynihan restates his commission's basic and sensible recommendations for reducing unnecessary secrecy throughout Washington's departments and agencies, proposals that now await legislative consideration by the next Congress. "We are not going to put an end to secrecy", the senator concludes, "nor should we. It is at times legitimate and necessary. But a culture of secrecy . . . need not remain the norm in American government as regards national security."

MANY EXPERIENCED intelligence community professionals see no need for the reforms that Moynihan advocates, however, and have criticized the commission's report accordingly. But at a recent gathering attended by this reviewer and several of these individuals, the complaints expressed by some were more angry than analytic and involved more curses than commentary. If nothing else, the extent of the bipartisan support enjoyed by the report of the commission (one of whose members was Senator Jesse Helms!) should encourage more constructive criticism from government classifiers than foolish and self-defeating efforts to demonize Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

Fortunately, whatever actions Congress might take or decline to take with regard to the Moynihan commission's proposals, the age of instant global mass media and the Internet has overtaken efforts at self-perpetuation by the executive branch's millions of vestigial informational censors, our domestic Canutes trying desperately but unsuccessfully to hold back the tide of data that inundates us in this Information Age. What it points up is that information is not the same thing as intelligence, which is another word for knowledge in a specific setting. And that, despite the common confusion on the point, is no secret at all. □

Allen Weinstein is president of The Center for Democracy. His new book, *The Haunted Wood: Soviet Espionage in America—The Stalin Era*, with co-author Alexander Vassiliev, will be published by Random House in January.

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Crazy Over Cuba

Andrew J. Bacevich

U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963*, vol. X (Cuba, 1961-1962) (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997), 1120 pages, $57.

WITHIN WEEKS of coming to power in January 1961, the administration of John F. Kennedy had "changed the face of American foreign policy." Such at least was the view of presidential special assistant, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. Indeed, according to Schlesinger, the hallmarks of the new administration—"the soberness of style, the absence of Cold War clichés, the lack of self-righteousness and sermonizing, the impressive combination of reasonableness and firmness, the generosity to new ideas, the dedication to social progress, the tough-minded idealism of purpose"—had transformed America's image abroad. Having awakened from the long national nightmare of the Eisenhower era, the United States was "emerging again as a great, mature, and liberal nation."[1]

Schlesinger drafted this smarmy memo to his boss on April 10, 1961. Precisely one week later, in an effort conceived, organized, and directed by the United States, some 1,500 Cuban exiles, heavily armed if indifferently trained and led, splashed ashore at the Bay of Pigs. The initial aim of this operation was to secure a lodgment on Cuba's southern coast. But the U.S. officials who had devised Operation Bumpy Road had persuaded themselves that a successful landing would detonate a popular uprising leading to the overthrow of Fidel Castro's communist regime.

The operation collapsed almost as quickly as it began. Within hours, the exile force was fighting for its life. Unwilling to order nearby U.S. naval forces into the fray—and thereby abandon the pretense that the invasion was a Cuban enterprise—Kennedy instead cut his losses. Two days after it had begun, Bumpy Road reached an abrupt dead-end. All but twenty-six of the invaders were killed, wounded, missing, or captured, a casualty rate of some 98 percent. Despite continuing official insistence that the United States was uninvolved, American fingerprints were all over the operation. The embarrassing defeat left the new administration looking neither great nor mature nor liberal.

Early chroniclers of Camelot insisted that this debacle was not without redeeming features. According to Theodore Sorensen, Kennedy himself "would be grateful that he had learned so many major lessons" as a result of the Bay of Pigs, and "at so relatively small and temporary a cost."[2] In this view, humiliation provided JFK with a crash course in statesmanship. Thus, Professor Schlesinger would assert that "no one can doubt that failure in Cuba in 1961 contributed to success in Cuba in 1962."[3] In short, the Bay of Pigs steeled Kennedy for the supreme crisis when he would save mankind from Armageddon.

If less preoccupied with burnishing the reputation of the martyred President, more recent accounts have tacitly endorsed this evaluation. The plaintive question that

[1]Specific references to documents within the book under review may be obtained from the editors upon request.

[2]Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 345.

[3]Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), p. 297.

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Kennedy himself posed in the immediate aftermath of failure—"How could I have been so stupid?"[4]—has defined the research agenda. Writers intent on documenting American stupidity have unearthed an abundance of evidence: a half-baked operational plan based on preposterously optimistic assumptions and faulty intelligence; a decision-making process within the executive branch that was sloppy and amateurish; incompetence, gross negligence, and dishonesty in the national security bureaucracy; and eleventh-hour presidential meddling in tactical details that transformed a long-shot into a sure loser. This focus on operational miscalculation has left intact the inclination to view the Bay of Pigs simultaneously as an anomaly (not a true reflection of American statecraft in the Kennedy era) and as an essential precursor (the President emerging stronger and wiser) to the heroics that would follow.

The great virtue of this recent addition to the *Foreign Relations* series is that it places the Bay of Pigs in an altogether different context. The materials reprinted in this collection span the period from January 1961, when the outgoing Eisenhower administration severed diplomatic relations with Cuba, until September 1962, on the very eve of the missile crisis. To be sure, the 443 documents, many culled from the files of the Central Intelligence Agency, illustrate in excruciating detail the myriad flaws in the planning and execution of Bumpy Road. But this collection demolishes the notion that the chief legacy of misjudgment in April 1961 was an acumen that a chastened President would subsequently put to good use in October 1962. On the contrary, the setback resulting from Kennedy's reckless approval of Bumpy Road prompted greater recklessness still. It led directly to Operation Mongoose, the administration's frenetic effort to even the score with Castro—of which more below. Masterminded by the President's closest advisers, notably his brother Robert, Mongoose repeated the errors that had led to Bumpy Road and added several more for good measure.

IN ONE SENSE, this volume reveals little in the way of startling new discoveries. Existing accounts by Trumbull Higgins, Lucien S. Vandenbroucke, and Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali have used to good effect many of the materials it contains. Yet to wade through the minutes and memoranda in their entirety, retracing with minimal intrusion by intermediaries the evolution of American policy, is to gain a heightened appreciation for the pathologies that by the 1960s pervaded the national security apparatus.

With regard to the Bay of Pigs itself, the record shows clearly that the CIA played the President for a sucker. In March 1960, Kennedy's predecessor ordered the agency to develop plans to overthrow Castro. Over the next year, what began as a small covert program metastasized. The original low-profile concept of guerrilla infiltration into the Cuban interior evolved into a blueprint for conventional war: an amphibious assault by a brigade equipped with tanks and other heavy weapons and supported by its own air force. Along the way, the training of this force under U.S. auspices at a "secret" base in Central America became front-page news.[5] Earnest professions that anti-Castro activities were exclusively the handiwork of freedom-loving Cubans fooled no one: Americans were calling all the shots. Indeed, CIA operatives had "reduced the exiled [Cuban] leaders to the status of puppets", treating them "as incompetent children whom the Americans are going to rescue for reasons of their own."[6]

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[4]Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy: Profile of Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), p. 94.

[5]"U.S. Helps Train an Anti-Castro Force at Secret Guatemalan Air-Ground Base", *New York Times*, January 10, 1961.

[6]The quotations are from the CIA's own assessment of the Bay of Pigs, prepared by CIA Inspector General Lyman B. Kirkpatrick. Only recently declassified, Kirkpatrick's scathing report is not included in the volume under review here. It is essential reading, however, and is available on the CIA web site at www.foia.ucia.gov/scripts/.

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Rather than boosting its prospects for success, expanding the plan only magnified the consequences of failure. Yet as Mark Falcoff has correctly observed, CIA officials like Deputy Director Richard M. Bissell, Jr.—puffed up by earlier successes in Guatemala and Iran—were not about to acknowledge that unseating Castro might prove to be a risky proposition.[7] Rather than warn the new President of the difficulties inherent in the invasion and thereby invite outright cancellation, Bissell pressed Kennedy to give the go-ahead. To allay presidential misgivings, Bissell agreed to a host of last-minute adjustments to make the operation less "spectacular": shifting the beachhead away from population centers, scheduling the landing during hours of darkness, and curtailing air support. These modifications demolished whatever remnant of tactical integrity the plan had retained. By his own account, Bissell concealed their significance from the President.[8]

Bissell engaged in this deception expecting that one of three outcomes would result. The preferred (if least likely) possibility was that the invaders might get lucky. Once ashore, some portion of the exile force might survive—if not inspiring a popular uprising, at least dispersing into the interior to provide the basis of an anti-Castro opposition that might mature over time. The second possibility was that the imminent prospect of losing the exile force on the beaches would prod the President into approving the use of U.S. forces—Bumpy Road, in essence, serving as a wedge that would open the way for an outright takeover of the island. The third possibility was that having launched the exile operation the United States would simply let it fail. Were that to happen, the fact that the President had been personally involved in the actual planning would reduce the CIA's own exposure; tarred with responsibility for the outcome, Kennedy would cooperate with damage control efforts, minimizing the negative fallout for all concerned.

Why did Kennedy fall into this trap? The President was seduced by several considerations. First, the CIA insisted that having gone so far, the United States could not now turn back and simply demobilize the force. Let loose in Miami, the disappointed exiles would be sure to talk. Critics at home and abroad would view Kennedy's decision to scrap the invasion as evidence of faintheartedness—this from a President who had vowed on the campaign trail to get tough on Castro. Second was the view, pervading the administration, that prospects for deposing Castro were fleeting. U.S. officials accepted without question comforting reports—almost certainly bogus—that popular enthusiasm for the Cuban revolution was dwindling. According to intelligence estimates, only 20 percent of the Cuban people supported Castro.[9] Yet these same officials also persuaded themselves that Castro was becoming stronger with each passing day—hence, the imperative of acting quickly, using the resources at hand. A third factor leading Kennedy astray was that virtually none of his senior advisers, whether those in his own inner circle or those inherited from Eisenhower, had the wit or confidence to challenge the premises of the CIA plan. Nor did they find fault with the continuous operational tinkering that occurred during the final weeks leading up to the actual invasion.[10]

In an episode in which few distinguished themselves, the performance of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) was especially egregious. The President repeatedly asked his military advisers to assess the evolving CIA plan. But

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[7]Mark Falcoff, "The Company Man", *The National Interest* (Winter 1996/97), p. 82.

[8]Richard M. Bissell, Jr., *Reflections of a Cold Warrior* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), pp. 172-3.

[9]In contrast, the KGB was reporting to the Kremlin that 80 percent of Cubans supported Castro. See Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *"One Hell of a Gamble:" Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958-1964* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), p. 86.

[10]To his credit, Schlesinger was an exception, but one without evident influence.

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when it came to Castro the Joint Chiefs were themselves not exactly disinterested observers. In the new administration's first week, they had gratuitously announced their belief that "the primary objective of the United States in Cuba should be the speedy overthrow of the Castro Government." Despite explicit warnings from their own subordinates, the Joint Chiefs breezily signed off on Bumpy Road.

Defeat, Kennedy famously observed, is an orphan. When the invasion failed, the brass were quick to absolve themselves of responsibility. General David Shoup, commandant of the Marine Corps, was explicit. On May 8, 1961 he testified that, "I don't feel that I or the other Joint Chiefs had any responsibility for the success of this plan." Asked where the President might turn for military advice on such matters, Shoup responded, "I would have to presume that in accordance with his title as Commander in Chief he would be thinking about the military part." Scholars searching for the roots of civil-military discord in Vietnam, take note.

FIXATING ON operational detail, neither Kennedy nor his advisers ever paused to ask larger questions: What sort of threat did Castro pose to U.S. security interests? What was the range of options available for addressing that threat? What were the risks involved? What were the costs?

Even in the aftermath of disaster, administration officials studiously avoided those questions. Thus, the administration's internal investigation of the Bay of Pigs—chaired by General Maxwell Taylor, with the President's brother, the director of central intelligence, and the chief of naval operations as members—was more an exercise in deflecting criticism than in reaching truth. The principal conclusion of this bureaucratic kabuki dance? Things went awry because the exile force lacked sufficient ammunition.

The real "lesson" derived from the failure of Bumpy Road was that half-measures led only to disaster. Henceforth the gloves would come off. As early as April 19 Robert Kennedy was insisting that "the time has come for a showdown" over Cuba. A day later Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara directed the JCS to develop plans to overthrow Castro using U.S. forces. This inspired the Air Force to suggest in early May "that the Cuban problem be resolved through rather heavy and perhaps indiscriminate bombardment." Liberals in the Kennedy camp argued for an indirect approach: to frustrate Castro's efforts to export his revolution throughout the region, the United States should beat him to the punch. Thus, recommended Richard N. Goodwin, assistant special counsel to the President, while subverting the Castro regime the United States should also "consider means of precipitating the fall of Trujillo and Duvalier and possibly Somoza" as well.

But in the confused and panicky aftermath of Bumpy Road, one voice dominated: Robert Kennedy's. For the attorney general, not strategy but action mattered most. In a handwritten note to the President on November 7, he wrote, "My idea is to stir things up on [the] island with espionage, sabotage, general disorder, run & operated by Cubans themselves with every group but Batistaites & Communists." Whether such a program would succeed in overthrowing Castro remained to be seen, "but we have nothing to lose in my estimate."

This determination to "stir things up" became the genesis of Operation Mongoose, organized in November 1961. The Kennedy brothers believed that at the Bay of Pigs so-called experts in the permanent government had duped the President. Mongoose was meant as payback, not just for Castro but for those who had led JFK astray. It would enable the White House to circumvent established bureaucratic channels. Robert Kennedy would provide energizing force. Brigadier General Edward Lansdale, legendary veteran of clandestine adventures in the 1950s, would serve as chief of operations.

From the outset, Mongoose was bravado and can-do swagger masquerading as policy. "We are in a combat situation", Lansdale

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declared in January 1962. Working on a crash basis, he flogged into existence an ambitious effort to "help the Cubans overthrow the Communist regime from within Cuba and institute a new government with which the United States can live in peace." The resulting plan distributed among various executive departments and agencies thirty-two specific tasks, running the gamut from "inducing failures in food crops" and picking targets for sabotage to recruiting defectors and devising "songs, symbols, [and] propaganda themes" to boost the morale of an all but nonexistent indigenous resistance. According to Lansdale, accomplishing this menu of tasks would culminate with Castro's overthrow. The target date for completion: October 1962.

The manic activity that followed included a pronounced element of opera bouffe. The slogan devised to inspire the Cuban opposition (task 27) was "Guasano Libre", loosely translated by one unimpressed State Department official as "worms of the world unite." Concerted efforts by the Defense Department to induce Cuban exiles to enlist in U.S. armed forces (task 32) yielded a meager total of 142 recruits. Hundreds more had expressed interest only to be rejected on "moral and security grounds." The explanation for this puzzling problem? Most of the would-be warriors, reported McNamara in September, had "admitted histories of sexual deviation."

Within weeks, it became evident that prospects for fomenting an uprising inside Cuba were remote and that "final success will require decisive U.S. military intervention." In short, sabotage, harassment, propagandizing, economic warfare, and assassination—for by the summer of 1962 at the latest that had become part of the mix—would at best provide a pretext for American invasion.

Disappointment did not persuade the administration to reassess its determination to depose Castro. Nor is there evidence that it abandoned Lansdale's timetable. Rather, by August 1962 Mongoose had undergone a metamorphosis. Rather than itself serve as the instrument of decision, it became a preliminary step, paving the way for "the instantaneous commitment of sufficient armed forces to occupy the country, destroy the regime, free the people, and establish in Cuba a peaceful country"—in other words a large-scale invasion by the United States. Indeed, the historian James G. Hershberg has suggested that Kennedy may have been preparing such an operation in October 1962, an intervention pre-empted by the onset of the missile crisis.[11] The information in this volume, which includes detailed contingency planning, is consistent with but does not fully confirm that hypothesis.

ONE THING the documents do make abundantly clear: obsessed with getting Castro, U.S. officials were oblivious to developments that might cast doubts on the wisdom of so doing. Hence the determination throughout the summer of 1962 to find a benign explanation for the rapidly increasing flow of Soviet military equipment and advisers into Cuba. In this regard, one joint CIA-State Department estimate had stated categorically in May 1961 that "the Bloc will not supply offensive type missiles nor [sic] nuclear weapons" to Cuba. For his part, Schlesinger expressed confidence in August 1962 that any weapons entering in Cuba would necessarily be defensive since "a launching pad directed against the United States would be too blatant a provocation."

Crazy over Cuba, the Kennedys and their lieutenants could not conceive that their own actions over the preceding year and a half might constitute in the eyes of their adversaries a huge provocation—and that such a provocation might subject the nation to grave danger.

Robert McNamara has since confessed that "we were hysterical" about Cuba. By "we" McNamara presumably means

[11]James G. Hershberg, "Before 'The Missiles of October': Did Kennedy Plan a Military Strike Against Cuba?", *Diplomatic History* (Spring 1990).

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Kennedy's national security team. Our very first impression of that team remains indelibly etched in memory. They were all brilliant: acclaimed scholars (from Harvard!), chief executives of major corporations and foundations, highly decorated military officers, seasoned intelligence professionals, above all the engaging and charismatic politician who was their leader. That mere citizens, unschooled in the intricacies of statecraft, should defer to such sophisticates in matters of national security seemed entirely appropriate.

Arguably, that deference—based on the presumption that foreign policy ought to be the exclusive preserve of elites—constitutes the real bedrock of bipartisanship both during and after the Cold War. Sometime after 1945, so the story goes, foreign policy moved beyond the ken of the average American (whose parochial inclinations tended dangerously toward isolationism anyway). Best to entrust the nation's well-being to those who know better.

Yet as this remarkable collection of documents clearly shows, hysteria over Cuba—compounded by the previous twenty years of unrelieved crisis—elicited from that elite policies that were naive, foolish, at times bizarre, and ultimately irresponsible. Viewed through the prism of its Cuba policy, the Kennedy administration is notable not for the soberness of style and tough-minded idealism that Professor Schlesinger claimed to detect. Rather, its distinguishing characteristics were arrogance, myopia, lemming-like conformity, and blind zealotry.

By mid-September 1962, the flow of Soviet arms into Cuba had become too blatant to ignore. Overflights of the island using U-2 spy planes provided imagery critical to assessing the situation. Dean Rusk was becoming increasingly nervous about the hazards that those flights entailed. At a meeting convened to discuss Rusk's concerns, Robert Kennedy taunted the secretary of state, "What's the matter, Dean? No guts?"

History does not record Rusk's reply. As this important volume demonstrates, however, the overriding requirement of the era was not guts but wisdom. On that score, the Kennedys and their lieutenants flunked. □

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They'll always have bœuf bourguignon...

In the course of the 1970s and early 1980s, this whole edifice—variously and affectionately described and recalled as *la France profonde*, *la douce France*, *la bonne vieille France*, *la France éternelle*—seemed, to the French, to come crashing down around their heads. The agricultural modernization of the 1950s and 1960s, the migration of the sons and daughters of peasants to the cities, had been steadily depleting and depopulating the French countryside, even as it grew vastly more productive. The towns and cities themselves, long preserved in the dowdy urban aspic of decay and underinvestment, suddenly became crowded and energetic. . . .

Whereas the France of, say, 1956 had been in most important respects fundamentally similar to the France of 1856—even down to a remarkable continuity of geographical patterns of political and religious allegiance—the France of 1980 did not even much resemble the country just ten years earlier. There seemed to be nothing left to hold on to—no myths, no glory, no peasants. As Pascal Ory expressed it, with plaintive irony, in his entry on "Gastronomy" in *Realms of Memory*: "Will French cuisine be all that remains when everything else has been forgotten?"

—Tony Judt, *New York Review of Books*, December 3, 1998

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Acheson, Simply Put

Robert Ellsworth

James Chace, *Acheson: The Secretary of State Who Created the American World* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), 512 pp., $30.

HE WAS COLORFUL and brainy, stylish and witty, hot-tempered and domineering, visionary and pragmatic—and a near genius with the written and spoken word. He was a partisan Democrat, and the skillful architect of an enduring bipartisan foreign policy. He was also an indefatigable workhorse who was always and everywhere a passionate seeker after excellence. He was a brilliant manager, leader, and administrator of the Washington bureaucracies of his day. He was not just an immaculately tailored Washington figure: he enjoyed barnstorming the country on behalf of his policies—sharing the spotlight with Mayor Hubert Humphrey at a huge civic affairs seminar in Minneapolis, speaking to a convention of the Machinists Union in Kansas City, sharing a three-day, 5,000-strong "family" gathering of planters in the Mississippi Delta. He was equally and completely at ease in the palaces of Europe and the cities of Asia. He staved off Soviet hegemony in Western Europe and bound the Federal Republic of Germany into NATO: the democratic, political, economic, and military alliance of the West. He fashioned a balance of power in Europe so that American soldiers would never again have to fight a great war there, and so far—that is, fifty years on—they haven't had to.

This theatrical, egotistical, serious, exuberant master of power politics at home and abroad was surely miscast as a mere secretary of state. Still, what else could Dean Acheson have been in the world of the 1940s and 1950s?

As James Chace points out in *Acheson: The Secretary of State Who Created the American World*, being secretary of state also fed Acheson with "the adrenaline of power." He loved it, and wrote to his daughter that his life in office was "a seductive drug" that helped him exercise his "vital power . . . far beyond what we had thought of as his strength." In turn, this power worked to the benefit of the nation in a tumultuous era of fateful, high-risk gambles. He was a street-fighter type whose gentlemanly experiences at Groton, Yale, and Harvard had not impaired in the slightest his keen ability to see, without illusion, where power lay. His indomitable character then gave him the self-discipline to pursue his interests (and the nation's) accordingly.

Acheson's strength of character did not fade with age. One of the most arresting anecdotes that Chace reports tells how an aging Acheson, then fully eight years out of office, advised President Kennedy when asked for his views—before the fact—on the CIA's planned invasion of Cuba in April 1961. With some asperity Acheson observed to the President that it didn't take Price Waterhouse to figure that an "invasion" force of 1,500 volunteers stood no chance against a standing army of 25,000. Similarly, a few years later when assessing U.S. military estimates of the course of the Vietnam War, Acheson did not hesitate to tell the formidable Lyndon Johnson, "Mr. President, you're being led down the garden path."

Chace's *Acheson* is biography at its best: encompassing, graceful, prodigiously researched and annotated. The scope of his effort to reach all sources is impressive, and his judicious use of documents from the for-

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mer Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and the People's Republic of China that have appeared since the end of the Cold War gives the book great historical depth.

The book James Chace has written is in fact better than the title bestowed on it. That title suggests that Acheson alone "created the American world." But while making clear Acheson's unique and powerful leadership role, the book actually does full justice—as Acheson would surely have insisted—to the crucial roles of Harry Truman and George Marshall, as well as to the important ones played by Eisenhower, Nitze, Vandenberg, and Robert Taft. Senator Taft led Congress in forcing the Truman administration to hammer out in the fiery crucible of public debate a policy that was not only bipartisan but had the full understanding and support of Congress, the press, and the public. When on April 4, 1951 Congress approved sending four divisions to Europe, both sides rightly claimed victory. The debate had been bruising, but it had been conducted under the discipline of the Constitution and with an acute awareness that history was in the making.

OF COURSE, like all the biographies and histories ever written, Chace's *Acheson* necessarily simplifies reality. No matter how hard historians try, they cannot convey anything at all unless they simplify; and reviews of books further simplify the already simplified. This process is culturally reductive, involving the casting of one era in terms of another, the subject's in terms of the author's—and the cultural and temporal gap between Acheson's day and ours, while only forty-five or fifty years, is not trivial. In those years we have lived through the cultural turmoil of the sixties, the collapse of the Soviet Union and communism, the globalization of financial transactions, the transformation of agriculture, industry, and communication under the impact of technology, and the emergence of intellectual postmodernism and multiculturalism in our great universities.

For this reviewer, the essential simplification to insist on is this: in Acheson's time there really were giants who walked the earth and who, as they did so, "created the American world." Such a broad and simplified reading, I suggest, is not without its uses today. Different as our times are from Acheson's, Chace's reading of their daunting uncertainties and challenges can serve to counter our own mood of depression and disillusion, and to give hope that we may yet overcome our sense of not knowing where we are or where we may be going. The imagination, the courage, the intelligence, and the moral integrity of those giants—one of the most impressive groups of Americans since the Founding Fathers—ought to be held up as models to which we might aspire.

But that said, these men were not perfect, and we can also learn from their shortcomings and various close judgments. In the process of crafting an innovative and durable foreign policy for this country, Acheson exposed himself to the moral hazard of helping to create and feed a national paranoia by (necessarily, as it seemed to him at the time) using the real Soviet political and military threat to our vital national interests in Europe to invoke the much broader ideological threat of communism. This required the sloganizing of "the American national interest" into a global ideology, without always distinguishing between vital interests and less than vital ones. At first this was in order to get two tactical wins in Congress: approval of the Truman Doctrine, and then of the Marshall Plan. Acheson knew precisely what he was doing. Sardonically, he referred to his own exercise in simplification as a process of making things "clearer than truth." It seemed both necessary and convenient in 1947.

There was plenty of cloth to work with. For the best part of a century Europe had been in the grip of a virulent ideological conflict between socialism and liberalism. Karl Marx had captured and inflamed the socially corrosive effects of the "industrial revolution" (itself a concept involving a huge simplification) when he wrote: "*Ein Gespenst geht um in*

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Europa. Es ist das Gespenst des Kommunismus." Acheson's invocation of that great Manichaean struggle in Europe, and his linking of it with the confrontation of the victors that followed the end of World War II, fed both McCarthyism and public confusion about our own national interests.

Later on, in 1949-50, Acheson again allowed the communist threat to override his own better judgment, this time concerning Vietnam. By that time, he had come to believe that the United States should no longer support the French war in that country, as it had been doing to the tune of 40 percent of the total operations costs. In his view, the French were colonizers, clinging to an anachronistic position in Indochina against the tide of nationalism. However, in order to buy French compliance with alliance policy toward Germany, Acheson supported ongoing congressional support for the French in Vietnam, again invoking the threat of global communism to justify doing so.

One lesson to draw from such simplifications of history on the part of a man as honest and sophisticated as Dean Acheson is that we would be wise to resist our own temptation to try to make sense of a confused and complex international scene by simplifying to excess. To take an obvious example, some exaggerate the threat posed to the West today by a renascent Islam, which is spuriously linked, both by prominent terrorists and anti-terrorists, to terrorism itself. Osama bin Laden, Hamas, and others clothe themselves in the mantle of religion to win legitimacy, and some Americans react wrongly against the religion instead of the terrorism. As the Acheson case demonstrates, however deliberately and calculatingly such simplification is engaged in, the potential for causing trouble is immense.

Exaggerations about conspiracies to take over the world sink their roots deep in collective paranoia, and the phenomenon itself never entirely dies. At aristocratic parties in Paris and at certain fashionable country clubs in the suburbs of Houston one still hears it about the Jews. A few years ago it was the Japanese. Who knows what may come next?

Another important reading of *Acheson* the book, as well as of the Acheson era itself, concerns the way he dealt with an historic issue that is very much with us as we move into the twenty-first century. It is the issue of China. Are the Chinese today conspiring to replace America in Asia, and at the same time become America's peer competitor in the world? In January 1950 Acheson could see that vital American national interests would be served by splitting China from the Soviet Union, and as Chace relates, he tried to bring this about. But as the China Lobby was then in full array and Mao had other fish to fry, he did not succeed. In February 1950 Mao signed up with Stalin and got seven fat years of industrial and economic assistance.

Beijing and Moscow split in 1957, as Acheson had anticipated they would some day. Fifteen years later, in 1972, Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger went to Beijing, met with Mao, and commenced the great U.S.-China rapprochement that Acheson had briefly tried to bring about a generation before. This severely limited the Soviet Union's room for maneuver, and it served both American and Chinese national interests, even though it ran against the grain of both powers' ideological predilections. The American Right never quite forgave Nixon for it, and many of them are still determined to see in China nothing but an enemy.

A MAN'S dealings with China, or communism, or politics do not define him. Acheson was, as each of us is, a unique confluence of inheritance and experience. What Chace has to tell us about Acheson's spiritual side bears no less on his public life than his many temporal talents. In a sense, Acheson's spiritual life may be read as an expression of his upbringing in the ecclesiastical house of his father, an Episcopal rector in a small Connecticut city (and later the Bishop of Connecticut). As a young adult just out of law school, Acheson became quite close

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to Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis, the Court's first Jewish member. One afternoon Brandeis erupted in prophecy, making a deep impression on the young man. As Acheson later paraphrased him: "Morality was truth; and truth had been revealed to man in unbroken, continuous and consistent flow by the great prophets and poets of all time." In his later life at moments of anguish and tension, Acheson would draw on those prophets and poets, or on Scripture and the Book of Common Prayer. In April 1950, under vicious and brutal attack from Joseph McCarthy, he cited the famous and somber words of the seventeenth-century poet and Anglican Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral:

> Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind.
>
> And therefore, never send to know for whom the bell tolls;
>
> It tolls for thee.

This was not a plea by Acheson for sympathy or help for himself—which would have been utterly out of character. It was rather a warning to the members of his audience—the American Society of Newspaper Editors—that they were themselves simultaneously participants in and victims of McCarthyism. It was in the style of a pastoral admonition from a Bishop to his flock.

At the end in 1971, more than a thousand mourners attended Acheson's funeral at the Washington Cathedral. They heard the service for the Burial of the Dead from the Book of Common Prayer. There was no eulogy; it would have been an unacceptable simplification. □

Robert Ellsworth is vice president and former chairman of the council of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, and a board member of The Nixon Center. He was U.S. ambassador to NATO in the Nixon administration.

Uncomfortable, But Invaluable

Peter Coleman

George R. Urban, *Radio Free Europe and the Pursuit of Democracy: My War Within the Cold War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 322 pp., $35.

WHEN THE VENEZUELAN terrorist "Carlos" (Ilich Ramirez Sanchez) was run to earth in Khartoum four years ago and flown to Paris for trial, the charges against him included the blowing up of the Czechoslovak service of Radio Free Europe (RFE) in Munich in February 1981. Four people were seriously injured. A few months after the bombing, one of RFE's Romanian broadcasters was stabbed twenty-two times in his Munich home. He survived, but earlier in London a Bulgarian broadcaster for RFE had been killed when a "poison umbrella" injected a ricin pellet into his thigh.

Other weapons for intimidating RFE broadcasters and staff included parcel bombs, cancer-inducing radioactive material, and anonymous letters along the lines of: "Oh, Deformed One, if you don't shut your Jewish trap, you will be gripping clay underground. Be careful, viper, we will be cutting out your venomous tongue."

These attacks and threats were one measure of RFE's success in eroding communist legitimacy by providing a surrogate free press

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in the Eastern bloc. With Radio Liberty (RL), which broadcast to the Soviet Union, it reached twenty-five million listeners and played a major role in the peaceful ending of the Cold War. Launched in 1951, it took a few years to strike form. Beginning as a CIA "black radio" whose mission included disinformation and counter-revolution, the turning point was the Hungarian bloodbath in 1956. RFE was accused of having incited and maintained the Hungarian uprising by broadcasting promises of Western arms. Fifteen thousand Hungarians were killed. Relying on archives located in Budapest, George Urban concluded that the RFE's Hungarian service had not incited revolution or promised arms, although its maudlin and pugnacious rhetoric, drawn from the pre-war Horthy regime, had encouraged false hopes.

After this tragic fiasco, RFE was reorganized to become a basically non-government voice of national traditions within the Soviet bloc, pursuing policies of reform and liberalization while never accepting the permanence of Soviet rule. No one symbolized this new direction—and the problems it faced—better than George Urban, whose last book (he died in October 1997) is this memoir of RFE and, to some extent, RL.

URBAN'S IS not a happy memoir. The subtitle, *My War Within the Cold War*, sums up his theme. The new policy involved years of often bitter struggle with both grotesque reactionaries and Western appeasers. Born in Hungary in 1921 to a family of some wealth and Magyar pride, Urban early in life absorbed a conservative aversion to communist vulgarity and fascist braggadocio. He found his first—and continuing—intellectual bearings in the gnostic poetry of Stefan George, a prophet of spiritual revival in a trivial age. Before his death in 1933 George asked to be buried in Switzerland with his head turned away from Nazi Germany. One of his disciples, Count von Stauffenberg, who had been at George's bedside as he died, led the plot to kill Hitler in July 1944.

As "a belated associate of the George circle", Urban published a study of its esoteric doctrines, *Kinesis and Stasis*, which was also his own response to the "barbaric rationalism and muddy populism that poured into Europe in the wake of the Red Army in 1944-45." After a couple of these postwar years in a "not very effective resistance movement", he left Hungary to settle in England. He sought work at the BBC but was turned down as "too hostile to the new facts of life in Eastern Europe." It was, he writes dryly, "not wholly beneficial for one's career or intellectual reputation to be known as an anticommunist." But he was later accepted in the Hungarian section of the BBC's European Service and his fifty-year career as a Cold War broadcaster began. The Cold War, he writes, gave "meaning to my life", so that even when rejoicing at the collapse of the Soviet system, "I felt a curious pang of loss."

Urban's move to RFE in 1960 followed his "insubordination" in opposing the BBC's support for "Britain's repressive policies" in Cyprus—policies he saw as incompatible with the libertarian messages the BBC was broadcasting to Hungary. His career at RFE traversed four periods. In the 1960s he ran its "intellectual bureau"; in the 1970s he was a contributing consultant; and in the 1980s he was its director, one of the "Reagan people." Finally, in retirement, he became a consultant again.

Throughout his RFE work, Urban was strongly influenced by the policy of the Congress for Cultural Freedom. He drew heavily on its apostates of the god-that-failed (Ignazio Silone, Arthur Koestler, John Strachey, Richard Lowenthal, Manes Sperber) to engage communist intellectuals "where it hurt most—in the area of moral conflict which we knew existed between their erstwhile idealism and their slavish yes-manship." Later he added new apostates to the list, a Milovan Djilas or an Andras Hegedus. They spoke powerfully as participants, not spectators, in communist debates.

Urban's distinctive contribution to the program of RFE was the creation of a journal-

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istic genre he made his own, the long interview-dialogue with scholars and statesmen on the great political and cultural questions of the day. After refining these exchanges on RFE, he transcribed them into articles for *Encounter* and then into a series of books, from *Détente* in 1976 (with Leo Labedz, Adam Ulam, Zbigniew Brzezinski, François Bondy, Richard Pipes, Dean Rusk) to *End of Empire: The Demise of the Soviet Union* in 1992 (Sidney Hook, Hugh Trevor-Roper, Karl Popper, Otto von Habsburg, Elie Kedourie). He devotes a chapter of his memoir to this new form of journalism.

THE SOVIET bloc deployed some three thousand transmitters to jam all the broadcasters of RFE and RL. But Urban maintains that these were less successful in undermining RFE's mission than were the forces of appeasement in the West—especially "the ceaseless sneering, jeering, and outright hostility of progressivist American opinion-makers. . . . I will not forget that long and bitter domestic opposition or how close the West had come, through complacency, inattention and incomprehension, to appeasing the modern world's most complete despotism."

This "domestic opposition" also influenced RFE staff, especially after the "revelation" in the late 1960s of CIA funding of both RFE and of the Congress for Cultural Freedom. The subsequent publicity induced guilt among some members of both organizations, as well as leftist posturing to demonstrate their good intentions and pure hearts.

In the 1970s Western appeasers within the organization "black-listed or blue-pencilled" broadcasts by, among others, Bernard Levin, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and Lord Chalfont. At one stage a chairman of the Board for International Broadcasting, which took over direction of RFE/RL after the withdrawal of the CIA, proposed inviting Soviet bloc officials to the Munich studios to challenge RFE/RL whenever they thought the Radios were unfair. The idea was only narrowly overruled.

Even into the early 1980s many leading commentators were deemed unfit for rebroadcasting on RFE. "Offenders" included Milovan Djilas, George Will, Joseph Kraft, Robert Novak, Rowland Evans, Jr., Vladimir Bukovsky, and Patrick Buchanan. The usual tags pinned to their articles were: *irresponsible, unbalanced, overwritten, oversimplified, overspeculative, unconfirmed.* When Milovan Djilas, for example, predicted the spread of the Polish crisis in 1981, several passages from his article were deleted before being broadcast and tagged: "background information only." Patrick Buchanan's piece asking why RFE was not doing more to support Solidarity was labeled "irresponsible."

Appeasers were not the only influences undermining RFE. Urban was keenly aware of communist agents and sleepers within the organization:

> I had handed down to me a number of editors and researchers with communist and left-socialist backgrounds and leanings. Some had come on board in the wake of the Prague Spring (1968) as a result of the Radio's support of reform communism and were so punctiliously protected by our unions and German labor law that they were virtually irremovable. Most of them had ceased to be communists in the narrow sense, but their loyalty was suspect. . . . They included members of various Eastern intelligence networks.

There was also another accommodating influence on RFE staff—"the pleasant life and good remuneration in Bavaria." Skiing grounds were close, tennis courts nearby, opera houses cheap. Salaries were generous, job security almost total. Housing and medical insurance were free, and there was a non-contributory pension plan. Absenteeism was tolerated, vacations were long and topped off with home leave. Many did not want to rock this boat. Fortunately, many others *were* willing to rock it—including Urban and the "Reagan people"—to the applause of their listeners in the Eastern bloc.

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URBAN'S STORY ends with his retirement following a "polite but bitter row" over the censorship, in his absence, of one of his own anti-Soviet articles that was to be broadcast shortly before the Reagan-Gorbachev Geneva meeting in November 1985. Urban believes the White House was more than satisfied with his comments, but one of the joint presidents of the RFE/RL deleted six passages as untimely.

When it was all over and the Soviet Union collapsed, Urban was justly proud of RFE's role. The stakes were high: "the nonmaterialisation of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*", as he puts it in his often heavy prose, "constitutes the single most important psychopolitical event of our century." At the same time he also felt outraged by the failure of the West (apart from Germany) to make adequate efforts to help in the reconstruction of countries whose anti-communist revolutions RFE had encouraged. "I felt betrayed . . . a moral trespass was committed."

Urban's symbols of the post-communist world that the West (and RFE/RL) helped create include Sarajevo, genocide, Zhirinovsky, and a mafia economy. His direct criticisms of the United States are more muted and largely confined to its "East Coast intelligentsia" and one or two "vacuous pragmatists." The only index entry for the United Kingdom is: "Britain, social and political shortcomings." (These turn out to include complacency, indolence, under-education, and short-termism.) As for France, it has no power and no principles. Even when he concludes his memoir with an elegiac tribute to RFE/RL and its "nongovernmental surrogate broadcasting", he adds that the 1994 International Broadcasting Act has re-imposed government control and killed "the sophisticated formula of unofficial 'home service' radio across international boundaries."

It is as if in old age, contemplating his life's work, Urban returned to the Stefan George circle of his youth and its disdain for "the devastating triviality" of the world. That is his right. And even if in his last book close argument sometimes gives way to impatient intuition, Urban has written an uncomfortable but invaluable account of Radio Free Europe's internal tensions and external achievements. □

Peter Coleman is author of *The Liberal Conspiracy: The Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Struggle for the Mind of Postwar Europe* (The Free Press, 1989).

Pinkish Power Squeeze

To be a liberal in Europe is a frustrating business. In Britain Liberal Democrats can only stand by and fume while Blair's Third Way steals liberal nostrums and enlists them in the service of a new centrist consensus designed to keep Lib Dems on the margins for ever. In Germany, the liberals have gone from being the king-makers of the Kohl era to bystanders in Schröder's. In Jospin's France, it is not possible to be a genuine liberal at all. The word itself has collapsed into a synonym for 'neo-liberal', which means rabidly free market.

Eleven out of the 15 governments in the European Union are pursuing a new pinkish consensus. Everywhere, the social-democratic left has regained power by squeezing into the centre, stealing from conservatives and liberals alike. It has stolen family values, tight money and privatisation from the conservatives and personal responsibility, autonomy, rights, constitutional and legal reform from the liberals. The result is what the *Guardian* calls 'social liberal' governments, in which social-democratic politicians adopt liberal politics and in the process keep liberals out of power.

—Michael Ignatieff, *London Review of Books*, October 29, 1998

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Dov Zakheim, Earl Tilford, Jr., Gideon Rose, John Gerhart, Sheena Duncan, Gavin Andersson, Rams Ramashia, Kenneth Wollack, Anthony Fleischer, Walter McDougall, George Kenney, Ernest Preeg

Raise the Anchor or Lower the Ship

JAMES SCHLESINGER ("Raise the Anchor or Lower the Ship: Defense Budgeting and Planning", Fall 1998) correctly postulates that America simply is not devoting sufficient resources to underpin its expensive and interventionist foreign policy. He is right to argue that there should be a coherent linkage between foreign and defense policy. And he likewise rightly contends that the current allocation of available resources does not enable the United States fully to exploit the advances in technology that would render our tactical aviation forces, in particular, capable of preserving our military superiority in the post-Cold War era.

Schlesinger appears to have focused excessively on air force tactical aviation, however. With the notable exception of the B-2 bomber, which has yet to be deployed in harm's way, U.S. Air Force aircraft remain critically dependent on the availability of overseas bases. As recent crises in the Persian Gulf have made clear, that availability is by no means a foregone conclusion. Equal emphasis should therefore be placed on the need to modernize maritime aviation, whether of the navy or Marine Corps variety.

Even more fundamentally, Schlesinger might have asked whether the current American interventionist policy is indeed the right one for the foreseeable future. This policy is the product of the Clinton administration, which, after six years, has yet to offer a compelling case for deploying peacekeepers for indefinite periods to regions of questionable value to American security. Were the United States to be more discerning about the commitments that it continues to pile onto its military, it would bring immediate relief to the pressure on military operations and maintenance accounts. These are the accounts, in turn, that have siphoned off funds critical to the modernization of our forces for the contingencies that will truly test American security in the twenty-first century.

Dov Zakheim
SPC International, Arlington, VA

JAMES Schlesinger makes some sound recommendations, but the emphasis placed on the future role of air power is misplaced. Air power advocates entice us with their vision of quick wars with little bloodshed, but is this vision based on historical precedent, or wishful thinking?

First, air power has never been decisive in any war, the Persian Gulf War included. According to the GPO's *Final Report to Congress: The Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, after 39 days of aerial attack on mostly stationary Iraqi forces sitting in the open, the Iraqi army remained a formidable force of 1,772 tanks, 900 armored personnel carriers, and 1,474 artillery pieces. Additionally, ground armies have prevailed even when the opposition had complete air supremacy. Communist victories in two Indochina wars, the stalemate in the Korean War, and the *mujaheddin* victory in Afghanistan are cases in point.

Second, we need a balance of land, sea, and air forces to shape the international environment, deter conflict, and, if necessary, fight and win the nation's wars. TacAir can-

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not accomplish the vast majority of peacetime engagement activities that help avoid major conflict.

Third, the TacAir power Dr. Schlesinger advocates addresses a narrow band of the spectral threat: halting armored or mechanized forces advancing across open terrain. If this analysis is based on the Gulf War, we must assume any future aggressor will have no air cover and little indigenous anti-aircraft capabilities. Only a foolish enemy would attack without taking American air power into account.

For the twenty-first century the United States needs a balanced and flexible military to accomplish the varied missions specified in the National Military Strategy. If we are to remain a great power, we must be willing to face realities.

Earl H. Tilford, Jr.
Strategic Studies Institute
Army War College, Carlisle, PA

NATO: The Dilemmas of Expansion

IN "NATO: The Dilemmas of Expansion" (Fall 1998) Zbigniew Brzezinski suggests that "it is not too early to ponder . . . such broad geostrategic matters as the long-term relationship of America to Europe, the proper scope of the Euroatlantic alliance", and NATO's connection both to the European Union and to Russia. On a first reading I thought this was a bit of wry humor, because surely the time for NATO to have considered such issues was *before* embarking on a course of expansion, not after.

The "dilemmas" Brzezinski lays out are neither new nor unexpected, but rather a consequence of the original decision to expand; to have started down this path without good answers about where it led was irresponsible at best. He is correct that "halting the process would be arbitrary . . . [and] demoralizing for those left out", and correct that any future non-trivial expansion would cause real problems. This is precisely why many felt that the Partnership for Peace, which blurred old lines rather than drew new ones, was a sensible policy for a changing and unsettled environment.

Yet Brzezinski does not flinch; his answer is for NATO to press forward to Russia's borders with all dispatch. Any suggestion that Russian objections should be considered seriously is dismissed as enabling a nostalgic craving for empire; the objections themselves, moreover, are adduced as evidence of the pressing need for further expansion, since "the fact [is] that all of Russia's western neighbors . . . fear its aspirations."

In Brzezinski's topsy-turvy world, the perennial worries of small, weak countries should drive U.S. foreign policy, while the most powerful and most critical country in the region should be ignored and even spurned—just as it faces a potential collapse into anarchy. Despite his obeisances to "prudence and deliberation", in other words, what his analysis lacks is a calm appreciation of geopolitical reality.

Gideon Rose
Council on Foreign Relations
New York, NY

Brzezinski replies:

I DO NOT buy Mr. Rose's formula that the only way to deal with the ambitions of "the most powerful and most critical country in the region" is to acquiesce to them—but if he had read my article to the end, he would have come across an argument in favor of expanding NATO's openness to Russia.

Destroying South Africa's Democracy

R.W. JOHNSON'S article about the Ford Foundation and civil society in South Africa ("Destroying South Africa's Democracy: USAID, the Ford Foundation, and Civil Society", Fall 1998) contains statements

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that are both untrue and misleading. While the Ford Foundation (along with the Kellogg, Mott, Anglo-American, Liberty Life, and other foundations) supported the Independent Study of an Enabling Environment for NGOs, we did not support the restrictive language contained in the so-called "draft bill" circulated for discussion. Nor did our grantees. The South African NGO Coalition (Sangoco), the Southern African Grantmakers' Association (SAGA), and the South African Council of Churches (all Ford grantees) opposed the mandatory registration of NGOs and the restrictive language, and SAGA published a thorough and constructive critique of the proposal. On the Ford Foundation's side, I personally opposed the restrictive language, albeit I did so in person before the Study Group rather than through the newspapers. Professor Johnson's statement that "Ford continued to deny its support to those organizations who had fought the bill, reserving its largesse for those that had either supported the bill or refused to speak out against it" is pure fabrication.

His comments about Sangoco's code of ethics are equally incorrect. The Coalition has its own code of ethics and did propose a similar code to the Northern NGO Forum, of which the Ford Foundation is a member. I objected to this proposal both in person and in writing, pointing out the inappropriateness of NGOs seeking independence for themselves while dictating to others. In the end the proposed "code" was withdrawn and the Northern NGO Forum set forth its own principles, which are entirely unobjectionable. Having attended a number of meetings on this subject, I can attest that the motivation was not an attempt by Sangoco to control or direct grant-making, but rather to deal with the invidious distinctions between local and expatriate salaries and the tendency of foreign donors to use foreign rather than local consultants.

As Dr. Kissinger has pointed out, even paranoids have enemies, but in neither of the above cases is Professor Johnson's conspiracy theory correct. Sangoco has some six thousand organizational members, grouped in nine provincial and eighteen thematic coalitions. As Johnson points out, it is critical of ANC economic policies (more from "below" than from the Left). It is ANC "aligned" only in the sense that both broadly represent the African majority. By this kind of inaccurate reporting, he detracts from his larger, more important point about the dangers of a one-party dominated state.

John D. Gerhart
Ford Foundation representative
in Southern Africa, 1993-98

R.W. JOHNSON'S McCarthyist article cannot go unanswered. His attack on the Ford Foundation is outrageous.

The Foundation has supported the Black Sash (a South African human rights organization established in 1955 with no political party affiliation whatsoever) for more than thirteen years. In all these years never once have we been asked about our political affiliation, nor has this been an issue. Since 1994 there has never been any suggestion from Ford that we tone down criticism of the present government, which we voice from time to time.

Secondly, to say that the first tentative draft proposal for a new bill relating to the non-profit sector came "out of the Ford corner" is ridiculous. I was a member of the Independent Study into an Enabling Environment for NGOs, which worked for several years to replace the repressive Fund Raising Act of 1978. We undertook a process of . . . consultation that led to two contradictory demands: a) that there should be voluntary registration and a very simple system to allow for that, and b) that ways must be found to prevent frauds being perpetrated on the public. Sixty percent of donated money in South Africa came from individual giving, not from the large foundations and corporations which are well able to monitor agreements with their beneficiaries.

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The document Professor Johnson refers to was never a bill and never went anywhere near parliament. Entitled *Draft Proposal Concerning a Non-Profit Organization Bill*, it was a working document for further discussion. The Development Resources Centre never supported the proposal, but instead facilitated a round of new discussions. Professor Johnson certainly made a good deal of noise about the document, but he would have done better to have engaged in the ongoing workshopping and debate. He might then not be so ignorant about the nature of the process. . . .

Sheena Duncan
Chairperson, The Black Sash Trust
Johannesburg, South Africa

IN SEPTEMBER the Development Resources Centre (DRC) learned that R.W. Johnson had used the pages of *The National Interest* to portray it, along with several other respectable organizations, as a threat to democracy. A few days later however, the DRC was honored with an award for its work in strengthening civil society and its contributions toward the creation of an enabling environment for not-for-profit organizations!

It could be argued that the accolade of the Katlego Award is sufficient answer to Johnson's smear, reflecting as it does the judgment of a distinguished panel drawn from business, multilateral organizations, and the NGO sector. But choosing to ignore untruths and distortions in the article would also mean that American opinion-makers have no warning that Johnson seeks to poison their perception of events in South Africa, and to undermine the image of agencies such as the Ford Foundation and USAID.

In the first place, deliberate misrepresentations need to be corrected. The DRC is not "an ANC-aligned NGO", but an independent, non-partisan development organization. The reference to "a bill prepared by the DRC" is similarly misleading. The document in question was not a bill but a discussion document, and was prepared by a prominent lawyer, not by the DRC. Johnson is well aware of these facts—indeed the document carried the lawyer's name on every page, and was clearly marked as a draft proposal. Finally, he was present at a gathering of corporate leaders at which I outlined the DRC's opposition to several suggestions made in the document. He has peddled his absurd story in order to create a straw man that could be heroically struck down by his foundation.

In order to give weight to his caricature of the DRC, Johnson neglected to tell readers about its work to strengthen the not-for-profit sector. The DRC launched the Independent Study into an Enabling Environment in 1992. Under the aegis of the Study Group thousands of organizations described their constraints and advanced ideas about building a sturdy democracy. A report entitled *Civil Society and Fundamental Freedoms* asserted that a strong civil society was needed for democracy to flourish, and influenced those who were drafting the country's new rights-based constitution. The final report of the Independent Study was published in December 1994.

If it is true that discussion of the lawyer's 1995 proposals could cause worry about the DRC's intentions, subsequent actions affirmed the stance of previous years. Early in 1996 an *Issues Document* summarized all concerns emerging from the debates around not-for-profit law. In September 1996 the DRC co-hosted a conference to explore these issues, involving nonprofit lawyers from around the world and delegates from fifteen African countries. The Helen Suzman Foundation was able to attend and to satisfy itself that the conference hosts wanted the widest possible freedoms for NGOs. Two months later the DRC assisted the NGO Coalition to draft recommendations to the government about a new legal framework. The Institute of Race Relations referred to these recommendations as "a cause for celebration", and later hailed the bill tabled in parliament as "a liberal bill." In all except one respect, this bill reflected the original recommendations of the Independent Study in 1994.

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Helen Suzman is respected by all shades of political opinion for her manifest integrity and unshakeable honesty. The foundation that bears her name will not be revered in this way if R.W. Johnson maintains it as a base from which to launch dishonest attacks on NGOs or to indulge in latter-day McCarthyism.

Gavin Andersson
Executive Director, DRC
Johannesburg, South Africa

. . . IT WAS WITH some surprise that we read Bill Johnson's article. He makes various claims that he did not attempt to verify with Sangoco. Sadly this has resulted in multiple inaccuracies and distortions, many of which do not warrant a reply.

Johnson criticizes Sangoco for "demanding the cancellation of debts . . . [and attacking] the Mandela government's economic policies." Firstly, it is every South African's democratic right and duty to engage in policy debates. Sangoco along with the churches, unions, and a range of civil society organizations has called for the restructuring of apartheid debts. While this campaign includes foreign debt, it is focused mainly on the internal debt. Sangoco believes these resources are urgently needed to meet the needs of the poor.

Johnson's account of the Northern NGOs Code is laughable. The code was developed following a workshop at NGO Week 1997. The first draft was circulated for comments. Northern NGOs welcomed the initiative, the first of its kind, and offered to coordinate the re-drafting of the code themselves. Under the leadership of Interfund a final draft of the code was developed and later adopted. Far from demanding the onerous reporting Johnson claims, the code offers a useful framework for engagement with Northern NGOs.

In conclusion, we call on Mr. Johnson to in future please check his facts before going to print.

Rams Ramashia
President, Sangoco
Braamfontein, South Africa

IN HIS RECENT article, R.W. Johnson misrepresents the program of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in South Africa. The article alleges that NDI, among others, has aligned itself exclusively with the ANC. In fact, NDI's programs in South Africa have been and are multi-partisan and inclusive. Since 1990 the Institute has worked with a broad range of political parties—from the ANC to the Inkatha Freedom Party to the Freedom Front—and has engaged civic organizations and government institutions supporting activities that strengthen the democratic process rather than the fortunes of any particular candidate or party. These activities are designed to enhance the nation's burgeoning multi-party system through strong national and provincial parliaments, active public participation in government, and a good governance framework that includes legislation that requires public officials to disclose income and assets (a provision that compares favorably with public integrity standards in long-established democracies).

Since the 1994 elections, NDI has actively involved all political parties elected to national, provincial, and local government in workshops and conferences in South Africa, and in study missions that have brought legislators and others to examine federalism in India, Malaysia, and Argentina, and public integrity codes in Britain and Ireland. Moreover, we have invited individual South Africans (judges, election officials, civic leaders, and others) to share their experience with decisionmakers in new and emerging democracies in Latin America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia, as well as elsewhere in Africa. Such multi-partisanship is not only advanced by NDI but supported by the ANC-led government as a means to bringing the multi-party constitution to life. Ironically, trustees of the foundation that Mr. Johnson directs have been active participants in NDI programs.

NDI programs in South Africa, funded by USAID and the National Endowment for Democracy, are designed to assist South African efforts that promote pluralism,

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increase public participation, and promote accountability and transparency in government. A democratic South Africa is a stabilizing influence—through its diplomacy and by example—throughout the continent and the world. Indeed, political leaders in places as diverse as Northern Ireland and Haiti have visited South Africa under NDI's auspices to learn lessons of reconciliation and democratic consolidation. Consequently, it is in the interest of the United States and the entire international community to help ensure that democracy endures.

I wish that Mr. Johnson or the editors of *The National Interest* would have contacted NDI to check the facts of the matter.

Kenneth D. Wollack
President, NDI
Washington, DC

IT WAS indeed heartening to read R.W. Johnson's piece in your Fall issue. He lists USAID and the Ford Foundation as being agents of the destruction of South Africa's democracy. He suggests that he would be better able to raise funds for a South African NGO if he were a Communist. He cites instances in which American money supports Communist organizations in South Africa. This must be said, for sometimes it seems to those members of the South African minority who consistently opposed apartheid that Americans have now rejected the principles that made their own country great. Americans now seem to accept that African governments can do anything they wish, simply because they are African. The fact that they often do not honor the democratic principles for which you Americans fought is of no moment. . . .

One of those principles was the limitation of the power of central government. Americans fought for their federal system. . . . Now Dr. Johnson is urging South Africans to fight for theirs, and rightly so. In South Africa the central device of apartheid enabled a white nationalist government to retain one-party power for more than forty years. Will the device of socialism, scientific or otherwise, enable a black national government to do the same thing? In short, *Siyaphi*? Where are we going? (*Si* – we, *ya* – go, *phi* – where) The question is in Zulu, the most used language of blacks in South Africa. . . . Where are we going after the next election scheduled for April 1999? Toward greater central control by the ANC/trade union/Communist Party alliance, or toward devolution democracy that will recognize and mobilize our exciting diversity? Dr. Johnson has raised exactly the right questions.

Anthony Fleischer
Cape Town, South Africa

Johnson replies:

I AM GLAD that, however belatedly, John Gerhart is willing to acknowledge the danger of a one-party dominated state in South Africa: there was no sign that such a recognition affected the way he doled out Ford money while he was here.

When the apartheid regime wanted to expel blacks from the cities to starve in barren rural backwaters it would term the latter "homelands"; when it wanted to rip communities apart it would call this "community development"; and so on. Our new elite has learnt this habit of Orwellian circumlocution all too well. So, of course, the Independent Study of an Enabling Environment for NGOs was really all about disabling NGOs: what it proposed was a government-appointed commission with power to sack the director and trustees of any voluntary association, replace them with its own, forbid it to fund-raise, change its name, subpoena it for endless harassment by the commission, and so on. The fact that Sheena Duncan could serve on the body that produced this Leninist monstrosity, or that the Development Resources Centre could launch and head up the whole effort, really makes criticism of what they say now almost otiose. Contrary to what Ms.

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Duncan says, this proposal was, as John Gerhart admits, widely referred to as a "draft bill" and it was able to gain the support of enough of the more authoritarian spirits within the parliamentary ANC thoroughly to alarm the democrats among us.

Another habit of the old Afrikaner Broederbond world, faithfully aped by its successors today, was for little groups of the politically like-minded endlessly to give prizes to one another. This sort of gift exchange is as harmless as it was amongst the Trobriand Islanders, but until Mr. Andersson trumpeted his own little prize to us I had never imagined anyone took such things seriously.

The campaign against the NGO bill was led by the Helen Suzman Foundation, the South African Institute of Race Relations, the Small Business Project, and the Free Market Foundation, though they were quickly able to enlist the indignant support of hundreds of charitable, welfare, and religious organizations. Mrs. Suzman was also strongly in our support. ANC-aligned NGOs stayed silent, refused to join this campaign, and, in Sheena Duncan's case, were openly critical of it. (Even today she dislikes the fact that I created "a good deal of noise" about this appalling proposal—presumably because she would have been happier if it had gone through.) Contrary to what John Gerhart says, the Ford Foundation has always refused to support any of the NGOs noted above—which are all liable to defend liberal values in a robust way. On the other hand those that, like Sheena Duncan's Black Sash, refused to support the campaign against the NGO bill—or even opposed it—included a number of Ford beneficiaries. (For the classic account of how Black Sash under Duncan gradually forsook liberal values and became unwilling to criticize torture and violence if it was committed by the ANC/South African Communist Party side, see Jill Wentzel's *The Liberal Slideaway*, 1995.)

Messrs. Gerhart and Andersson (though not, apparently, Ms. Duncan) now wish to say that they didn't like the NGO bill after all and fought against it. Perhaps it was because they were doing good with such stealth that these efforts were so entirely invisible to the rest of us. Personally, I attended one meeting held in Cape Town where a DRC representative led a discussion in favor of the bill. I and several others objected strenuously to its clearly anti-democratic nature. The response we met was a sort of iron-clad charm in which we were thanked for our interesting, if eccentric, contributions before the summing up made it clear that none of our points would be listened to and that the proposal would now advance to its next stage. This style of "consultation" is all too familiar to anyone who has worked within the ANC, SACP, or any of their front organizations. After one or two such encounters those of us who opposed the NGO bill stopped going to any more of them and waged our own, ultimately successful, campaign.

It is difficult to take seriously what Messrs. Gerhart and Ramashia say about Sangoco. This organization, we are solemnly told, represents six thousand NGOs—and it just so happens that Sangoco, upon its formation, immediately adopted a set of ultra-left economic proposals. One wonders about how the six thousand all just happened to come up with exactly the same economic critique of the ANC government at exactly the same moment. Mr. Ramashia's guff about democratic debate notwithstanding, the six thousand did not get to vote on this and all economic debate in Sangoco is within a closed ANC/SACP universe.

Of course, only what Ms. Duncan terms a "McCarthyist" (she means McCarthyite) would regard this resounding example of democratic centralism as rather less than democratic, or would regard it as other than coincidental that within days both the SACP and the Communist-aligned trade unions had endorsed Sangoco's position word for word. Similarly, it was doubtless a complete fluke that Sangoco's attempt to exert pressure on Northern NGOs occurred just as the ANC was taking aim at the foreign funding of

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liberal NGOs like the Institute of Race Relations; just as it was another coincidence that Frank Chikane, who heads deputy president Mbeki's office, should launch an identically phrased tirade against Northern NGOs just as Vice President Gore was about to visit the country. Again, anyone who has experienced SACP/ANC front organization tactics will recognize a stalking horse when he sees one. One could forgive Mr. Gerhart being so naive as to look this particular stalking horse in the mouth if only he hadn't been feeding it Ford money. I am in favor of democratic pluralism—including a fair crack of the whip for the SACP—but I don't see why Ford should have wanted to pick up the tab for them like this. . . .

Finally, I have heard golden opinions expressed on all sides about Mr. Wollack and have repeatedly attempted to contact him. I am sure NDI is a splendid organization but I am not the only person here to complain to visiting American scholars and diplomats about the NDI program here. If he would be so kind as to contact me at hsfound@iafrica.com I would be delighted to hear from him.

The problem running through all this is a pervasive political correctness which operates in the interests of a single hegemonic bloc. The theme of my article was that this has led many American organizations and individuals, some of them doubtless with the best of intentions, seriously astray in South Africa. In their eagerness to be on the ANC side they imagine this puts them, as Gerhart says, on the side of all black South Africans (though the latest polls show the ANC down to 57 percent), without thinking much about what happens if everyone supports the same overwhelming party.

Through the long dark night of apartheid the United States stood for a market-friendly and liberal multi-party democracy in South Africa. This was a fine thing to do and Americans should be proud of the stand their government and donor organizations took then. All I am asking for is that Americans carry on standing for the same things now. You had it right the first time.

Salisbury: A Model for Imperialists

ANATOL LIEVEN'S erudite history lesson on how to be a wise hegemon ("Lord Salisbury: A Model for Aspiring Imperialists", Fall 1998) could not be more timely. Salisbury's was a steady hand at the helm of the British Empire and the lever of the European balance of power at a time when enthusiasts and scare-mongers ranging from idealistic Gladstonians to Social Darwinists such as Joseph Chamberlain to the declinist and protectionist Tariff Reform League to the Socialists of the Fabian Society all longed to deploy Britain's financial and military power in one or another crusade to redeem the world. What distinguished Salisbury's *Weltanschauung* from those of the various cognoscenti was precisely the fact that "it was rooted in his personal character and religious sense." Salisbury understood—and he was one of the last British and American statesmen to do so—that the greater a nation's power the more it must trim its moral sails lest it mistake its own might for virtue, or its own virtuous pronouncements for might.

I doubt, however, whether Lieven's lesson to the effect that "realism can be combined with conscience and honor" will have its desired effect on American foreign policy today. Salisbury, after all, was a high Tory aristocrat in the Indian summer of the old European order. He could afford (barely) to snub the passions and rhetoric that drive mass democracy, and only then because anti-Irish bigotry sustained his Unionist majority. Soon enough, in Britain not to mention the United States, the capricious flames of public opinion, fanned rather than doused by demagogues equating morality with everything from the League of Nations to isolationism to appeasement to "assertive multilateralism", consumed all Salisbury stood for. Some "conservatives" today in fact resemble Woodrow Wilson and

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his antecedents Gladstone, Palmerston, and Canning in their zeal to order the affairs of all nations—heedless of cost and risk and sure of their own rectitude—more than they do Salisbury and his antecedents Castlereagh, Aberdeen, and Disraeli.

Perhaps the best we can hope for is "conservatives" who speak imprudently to get elected so that they may act prudently in office. For the alternative is today's liberals, who seem really to believe their own humbug.

Walter A. McDougall
University of Pennsylvania

The Man Who Saved the Day?

LIES POISON this administration throughout. President Clinton sets the tone, his circle of cronies leaps to ape him. Not even the lofty, supposedly bipartisan realm of foreign policy remains immune. One must, therefore, exercise considerable caution in assessing what a former senior Clinton State Department official says, absent independent corroboration. But Paul Wolfowitz throws caution to the winds in reviewing Richard Holbrooke's *To End a War* ("The Man Who Saved the Day—Sort Of", Fall 1998). This credulous approach can perhaps only be explained by motives that have less to do with rational policy analysis than with the forgiving, clubbish spirit of Washington insiders.

Holbrooke claims the President was unaware, until he enlightened him, of an American commitment regarding the potential forcible extraction of United Nations peacekeepers from Bosnia. Finessing that commitment led to the possibility of Dayton and Holbrooke's triumph. Wolfowitz buys the story line, giving Holbrooke full credit for engineering policy from start to finish, yet such postulated presidential dimness seems utterly implausible.

More obnoxious still, Holbrooke trashes skeptics of intervention from the professional military and, in particular, Admiral Leighton Smith. Wolfowitz chimes in that he can't imagine President Bush permitting Smith to behave as Holbrooke describes, but who is to say what Smith really did or did not do? According to other former senior officials in a position to know, Holbrooke was not even at key meetings where, according to him, he changed the course of policy against Smith's advice. Sources add that Holbrooke's position on bombing the Serbs (a huge self-promotional toot) was at times the opposite of what he recounts.

Holbrooke's instant memoir makes him look good now. But a more balanced judgment must await other memoirs, interviews, and declassified government documents.

George Kenney
Washington, DC

Wolfowitz replies:

IN MY REVIEW of Richard Holbrooke's book and the diplomatic process which it describes, I noted that the failure by both the Bush and Clinton administrations to lift the arms embargo prolonged the war. And the failure to equip the Bosnians adequately now makes the whole Dayton structure precarious. This failure in turn, I pointed out, makes it impossible to achieve an adequate balance of power. And hence the whole arrangement—which is really a partition masquerading as something else—is far too dependent on the indefinite commitment of American troops and on the good will of Milosevic, who is just as much a war criminal as Karadzic and Mladic, both of whom Holbrooke denounces so eloquently.

In that essay, I tried to evaluate cooly and fairly the record of a talented man, someone from the opposite side of the political aisle, who helped implement a flawed policy within a leaderless administration. I gave his book and him a mixed review. Mr. Kenney prefers harsher language and criticizes my lack of incivility, which he calls clubbishness. Oh well.

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Serious About Sanctions

PROFESSOR Drezner's article ("Serious About Sanctions", Fall 1998) attempts to demonstrate that economic sanctions "can be a valuable policy tool in some domains" by attacking "flawed arguments" used by critics of sanctions. The attempt fails, however, because it is largely in the abstract with little evidence of how sanctions, in fact, have been such a valuable policy tool, especially during the very changed international economic circumstances of the 1990s. For unilateral sanctions, in particular, which are at the center of the current sanctions policy debate, Drezner goes as far as to conclude that unilateral sanctions "are sometimes more effective than multilateral sanctions"—but again with no recent examples of such effectiveness.

For principal unilateral sanctions target countries of China, Cuba, Iran, and Libya, Drezner admits the "general failure" of U.S. sanctions policy. For the recent unilateral sanctions against India and Pakistan, related to nuclear non-proliferation, he states that they have not succeeded in 1998 but that they did act as a deterrent in 1995 through "faking it and making it." However, in light of the 1998 experience, the United States clearly can no longer fake it and make it in this area. Drezner does not mention the 1997 ban on new U.S. investment in Myanmar, but this unilateral sanction (as distinct from diplomatic and multilateral actions) was also unsuccessful since the few U.S. investors who drew back because of the sanction were quickly replaced by third country investors.

Narrowly targeted unilateral sanctions have on rare occasions produced positive foreign policy results, albeit at some cost to U.S. commercial interests, and Drezner cites the embargo on certain nuclear technology exports in the 1970s in this category. He rightly qualifies the targeted approach, however, as having worked best when "the United States held a near monopoly position in the global marketplace", and in the late 1990s there are few products that still meet this test, including civilian nuclear power reactors.

Finally, Drezner incorrectly includes economic aid as a form of unilateral sanction, citing loans granted to Israel in 1991 as leverage to halt new Jewish settlements in the West Bank. Such aid, however, is an alternative to sanctions, a "carrot" rather than a sanctions "stick." Another current example is U.S. aid to North Korea to deter nuclear weapons development. This is a controversial policy, but there should be no question that the substantial aid provided is a positive incentive rather than a form of punitive sanction.

In sum, Drezner gives no significant examples of successful unilateral sanctions during the 1990s while citing a number of failures, and he should therefore reconsider his "valuable policy tool" assertion.

Ernest H. Preeg
Center for Strategic and International Studies
Washington, DC

Drezner replies:

DR. PREEG is correct to point out that in the 1991 Israeli case, the U.S. sanction was a threat to withhold loan guarantees. However, neither the United States nor Israel interpreted the U.S. threat as a carrot; both viewed it as an act of economic coercion because the status quo ante on this issue was automatic U.S. approval of loan guarantees. Thus, economic inducements are useful in two ways: they can be used to cause an immediate change in a target state's behavior, and they can be withdrawn later as a sanction to alter a country's behavior. Today's carrots can become tomorrow's sticks, and the reverse is true as well; in the early nineties, the United States used the prospect of lifting trade sanctions against the Soviet Union as a way of moderating Gorbachev's behavior in the Baltic republics.

Preeg is wrong, however, to claim there have been no examples of unilateral successes.

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In addition to the 1991 Israeli episode are the following examples:

1) In July 1993 the United States successfully used the threat of trade sanctions to block Russia's transfer of sophisticated cryogenic rocket engines to India.

2) In January 1997 the United States threatened to halt aid to South Africa unless that country halted its arms exports to Syria. South Africa complied.

3) In July 1997 the United States threatened aid sanctions against Croatia unless that country complied with the 1995 Dayton Accord. Croatia acquiesced.

4) From 1994-98 the United States applied economic pressure to ensure that Colombian President Ernesto Samper, accused of accepting drug money in his 1994 election campaign, would step down this year. He did.

5) In a September 1998 speech at the United Nations, Pakistan's prime minister pledged to sign a nuclear test-ban treaty if U.S. trade and financial sanctions were lifted.

Some of these cases are not unalloyed successes, just as some of the cases Preeg mentions are not absolute failures, i.e., Libya. Nevertheless, contrary to Preeg's assertions, the end of the Cold War has not stripped the United States of its ability to apply unilateral economic sanctions. □

A Whistle-Blower's Apprenticeship

[Major Scott] Ritter theorized that the Iraqis were sending decoy Scud launchers into the field, and that the decoys were absorbing tons of coalition matériel. He wrote report after report saying so, but General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, the coalition's commander-in-chief, needed to show that the Scud problem was being handled, and he had videotape from F-15 gun cameras that seemed to prove it. On January 30, 1991, Schwarzkopf held a press conference and played a tape of a Scud raid for a worldwide television audience, saying, 'We knocked out as many as seven mobile erector-launchers in just that one strike.'

The next morning, when Ritter was filling out the battle-damage report and came to the section for confirmed kills, he wrote 'Zero.' His superiors reminded him that Schwarzkopf had just announced seven Scud hits. 'And I said, "Well, the General's wrong,"' Ritter recollects. 'They said, "Who the hell are you to tell the General that he's wrong?" I said, "I'm the battle-damage-assessment officer, and I'm telling you that there aren't seven kills, and I'm not going to falsify a report."' A panel of military analysts was assembled to settle the dispute. Not surprisingly, they decided for the General and against the Captain, and Ritter's tenure as battle-damage-assessment officer effectively ended....

Ritter's theory about the Scuds eventually proved to be correct.

—Peter J. Boyer, *The New Yorker*, November 9, 1998

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Wye Gamble?

Adam Garfinkle

AS WITH the famous September 13, 1993 handshake on the White House lawn, and as with every other symbolic passage in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations since, the quick-firing impresarios of the electronic media have referred to the Wye Memorandum as a peace agreement. Like its predecessors, however, it is only an agreement *about* peace that may, but does not necessarily, lead us closer to it. Wye's real significance, rather, lies in three other, related domains.

First, whether it paves the way to final status or breaks down during its twelve-week implementation period, Wye spells the end of the basic logic of the Oslo process.

Oslo was designed as a confidence-building device to bring Israelis and Palestinians to a point where resolving their core differences could at least be contemplated. As a way of testing whether the parties were ready for conciliation, Oslo, or something like it, has to be reckoned a necessary step for achieving peace. But the testing phase has now run its course, and the grade earned is not so good. With patience having worn paper thin on all sides, it is inconceivable that another twenty-one months—the period from Hebron to Wye—could elapse in interim limbo. Wye will either get the parties from the foothills of interim measures to the summit of final status or, before very long, prove that the ascent is not yet possible. Unlike Oslo II of September 1995 and the Hebron accord of January 1997, Wye does not reprieve and repackage Oslo but, for better or worse, transcends it.

If for worse, Wye will break down short of full implementation. As I write in mid-November, this seems eminently possible. The schedule has already slipped, and the language of the Memorandum itself, as well as post-summit interpretations of its contents by both sides, amounts to a multiple-vehicle accident waiting to happen. But even if Wye survives its infancy, the best that one can reasonably expect are final status negotiations that are too fractious to make much headway, but too precocious to be allowed to fail. In other words, we could be in for another protracted bout of process without substance, and for the same reason that Oslo endured so long despite its shortcomings: the absence of a palatable alternative. Either way, Oslo's logic no longer applies. Neither side can put store any longer in interim arrangements that erode rather than build confidence, and a stalled final status negotiation will at least be about final status, not interim, issues.

As important, both the psychological and physical conditions of Israeli-Palestinian relations have changed irrevocably. In September 1993 the Palestinians lacked a sustainable territorial base from which to pursue their interests. Assuming that Wye is eventually implemented, they will have acquired quite a solid one—and with it a lot more to lose than ever

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before. For this reason, too, Oslo's historic labors are over.

Only the naive ever imagined that Israelis and Palestinians would be on the verge of a complete solution to the century-old conflict over the land of Israel in just a little over five years. But only cynics failed to appreciate the prospect that Oslo could midwife a higher quality Israeli-Palestinian confrontation—a learning to live beyond war despite an inability to live in true peace. That being so, Wye's second real significance is that its terms will inevitably mark political and military "red lines" for all parties in what will remain, like it or not, an ongoing conflict. Wye is less likely to be a bridge to a successful final status negotiation than a barricade against a mutual disavowal of diplomacy and retrogression into mass violence.

This is no small matter. There has always been a chance that the eventual failure to resolve key issues—borders, Jerusalem, settlements, refugees, water—would threaten to transform Oslo's interim psychology of prophylactic optimism into one of "no more Mr. Nice Guy." Now that expectations have been healthily lowered all around, the task at hand is to prevent them from being crushed altogether. At this sensitive moment—beyond the interim logic of Oslo but shy of its formal May 4 expiration—the Wye Memorandum is well suited to advancing this limited but precious end. This because for the first time the Palestinian Authority's repeatedly lapsed obligations with respect to both security cooperation and public rhetoric (including the Covenant issue) are thoroughly detailed, as are several Israeli commitments. The sides do not yet agree on all the rules that should obtain between them, but at least now they have a reasonably well-calibrated ruler with which to measure their differences.

Wye is also of use to the parties because it names an authoritative third-party arbiter—the U.S. government—to apply that ruler. Thus the Memorandum's third mark of significance: a qualitative deepening of the U.S. role in Israeli-Palestinian affairs.

BY MAKING SUCH a heavy investment of diplomatic prestige, the United States has acquired an intense interest in Wye's success. For the short-term, this may be beneficial to Israelis and Palestinians, but it represents a huge long-term gamble for the United States and the local protagonists alike. One aspect of that gamble is that the new U.S. role might reduce incentives for the parties to negotiate with each other and further increase incentives to negotiate with Washington. This would be counterproductive, as even the run-up to Wye makes clear.

It is important to be precise here. There is a difference between U.S. mediation that brings the parties together and a mediation that substantively affects what happens once they have met. None of the progress made since 1973, which has reduced the Arab-Israeli conflict from a major threat to international security to a neighborhood-scale problem, could have been achieved without the first kind of effort. The latter sort, on the other hand, is contentious. Some have argued that only U.S. imposition and management of a settlement can achieve peace—though what sort of peace that could be has never been clear. For the most part, U.S. diplomats have wisely rejected that advice, reasoning that genuine conciliation cannot be forced from the outside.

It is not always easy, however, to keep the two sorts of mediation separate. Relations between Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Netanyahu deteriorated so dramatically after Hebron that some way had to be found to restore direct contact between them. But one of the means employed—U.S. pressure on Israel to accept a 13.1 percent territorial withdrawal, and this despite explicit American assurances in a side letter to the Hebron accord that it would bring no such pressure—concerned a key matter of substance.

The administration understood the risk, but took it anyway. The result was that Arafat concluded that he needn't make concessions to Netanyahu because the Americans were doing his heavy lifting for him. Realizing the precedent for final status that would be set if

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he succumbed to such pressure, Netanyahu strove mightily to deflect it, to the point of rejecting ultimata delivered up close and personal by the U.S. secretary of state. Only when Secretary Albright told Arafat that she could not deliver the Israelis, and that he would have to drive his own bargain as best he could, did the fabric of direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations begin to reweave itself. In essence, then, it was the deflection of U.S. pressure, partial and temporary though it turned out to be, that led to the Memorandum, not the pressure itself.

The delicacy of U.S. policy after Wye lies in the need to rebalance its mediation away from the substantive and toward the procedural sort. American policymakers are well aware of this need. Two of the Memorandum's five side letters from the United States to Israel emphasize the point: assurances that the United States will not adopt a substantive position on a third Israeli redeployment, and that it will not get involved in the details of final status negotiations. But the United States is so enmeshed in the Memorandum that it will not be easy to avoid getting involved in matters of substance down the road. Process will creep toward substance because the parties will not be able to settle their differences without U.S. intercession. So if final status talks falter, as is virtually inevitable, Wye's "red lines" will apply not only to Israelis and Palestinians but to Americans suspended between them as well. In short, the task may turn out to be too delicate by half.

Too much substantive U.S. involvement would be dangerous for the peace process in any event, but it will be even worse if the Clinton administration papers over Palestinian non-compliance with its commitments. Unfortunately, it would not be surprising if it did, for this administration has already brokered several deals—over Bosnia, North Korea, Iraq, and, prospectively, Kosovo—whose violations the United States subsequently failed to rectify for fear of wrecking the appearance of diplomatic achievement. If it happens in the case of Wye, it will sharply reduce chances for peace, because the Israeli willingness to make concessions is partly a function of its underlying trust in American support.

WASHINGTON'S WYE gamble transcends even the Israeli-Palestinian domain. The United States has no magic wand and if, despite its best efforts, Israel and the Palestinians cannot make significant progress, Washington will be tagged with the failure. Until Wye, U.S. diplomats could credibly threaten to "walk away" if Israelis and Palestinians failed to engage their own better natures. That is no longer possible. The law in superpower diplomacy is that if you broker it, you buy it—and that is what the Clinton administration has done. Despite the best instincts of its long-serving and long-suffering experts on the subject, it has bought into the details of Israeli-Palestinian concatenations and contentions at such an advanced level that it now half owns them. And like every purchase, this one carries a price.

It could be a steep one. U.S. interests are best served by minimizing the link between the noisome but not inherently dangerous Israeli-Palestinian quarrel and the far more worrisome ones of Southwest Asia, but the U.S. vow to bring the likes of Benyamin Netanyahu and Yasir Arafat to terms maximizes it instead. Having thus raised the bet, an American failure to manage matters successfully would put in jeopardy as never before wider U.S. interests from Casablanca to Kabul.

Again it is important to be precise, for the linkage issue is another in which a simple distinction goes a long way. There is a difference between acknowledging some linkage between U.S. success in Israeli-Palestinian diplomacy and the state of U.S. relations in the Persian Gulf on the one hand, and allowing policy to be driven by such a linkage on the other. The former is a prudential acknowledgement of fact, the latter a manifestation of bad judgment.

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In the first place, such linkage as does exist is often exaggerated. In practical terms, it lately has meant that if America's Arab allies are leery of supporting U.S. threats against Iraq when they doubt the seriousness of those threats, they will publicly justify their reticence by reference to alleged U.S. failings to pressure Israel. While Arab leaders are not entirely unconcerned with the fortunes of the Palestinians, to take such protestations at face value speaks poorly for the professionalism of U.S. diplomats. Moreover, linkage works in the other direction as well: U.S. weakness in dealing with Iraqi (and Iranian) assaults against regional stability encourages the escalation of threats against Israel, making Israeli leaders less willing to take security risks for peace with the Palestinians—especially since Palestinians have inclined to cheer Saddam each time he gets into a test of wills with the United States.

The renewal of U.S.-Israeli strategic cooperation through a separate Memorandum of Understanding signed at Wye reflects at least a belated recognition of this latter sort of linkage. Unfortunately, the Clinton administration has mishandled the former sort. Last winter's crisis with Iraq increased U.S. concern with the Oslo stasis and helped produce imbalanced pressure on Israel. Just days after Wye, Secretary Albright, apparently thinking the linkage problem solved, urged America's Arab allies to support the new accord. Embarrassingly, they demurred, and it is not hard to see why. With another U.S.-Iraqi confrontation brewing, they knew that the effort to solicit their support for Wye was prelude to soliciting it for another U.S. tilting against Saddam. Remembering what happened with the Iraqis last winter, one can forgive their reluctance to sign on in public.

It is harder to forgive the administration for not grasping what this reluctance says about linkage: that *we* are the missing link. Diplomatic pyrotechnics like Wye cannot substitute for a regional policy otherwise lacking in credibility and verve. If the administration had shown proper understanding and determination from the outset in dealing with Iraq, Israelis would better trust our brokerage and our Arab friends would better trust our protection. They would then have a good deal less incentive to offload their anxieties onto one another, and everyone, except Saddam and the mullahs, would be much better off for it.

THE WYE MEMORANDUM is justified in terms of what it may do for Israeli-Palestinian comity. But by magnifying the regional stake in the American management of Israeli-Palestinian diplomacy without enhancing in like proportion the prospects for peace, it may unwittingly injure other relationships that are strategically more important. Not a good idea but, once again, something we should be used to by now. The Clinton administration has committed U.S. and NATO prestige in the Balkans at the expense of ultimately more important U.S.-Russian relations. It recently brokered a deal between feuding Kurdish factions at the risk of harming a crucial strategic relationship with Turkey. It has appeased North Korea in hope of buying time and avoiding crisis, but in so doing has scared the wits out of the Japanese, whose full attention we have sought over international economic issues of the highest importance. Wye's upside-down strategic gamble is wholly in character with the administration's chronic failure to prioritize U.S. interests.

For reasons good and not so good, then, Wye's fate will be more important to American interests than Oslo ever was. So, to the by now almost ritualized expression of hope that this latest Israeli-Palestinian effort at peacemaking works out for the best, we should add this time that, strictly from a U.S. perspective, it had better. □

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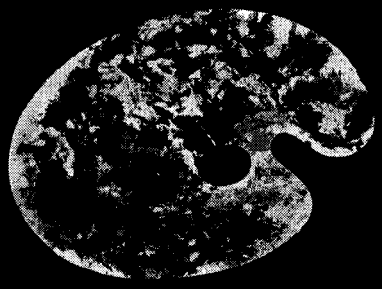

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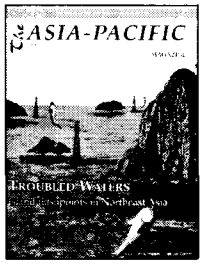

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